NAGARJUNAKONDA

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

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NAGARJUNAKONDA

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and
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NAGARJUNAKONDA

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Valley of Nagarjunakonda (16°31'N, 79°15'E), already known for its rich archaeological relics as well as for its tragic submergence is situated in the Macherla Mandalam of District Guntur, Andhra Pradesh. It is about 160 km to the South-East of Hyderabad, the Capital of Andhra Pradesh and about 147 km from Guntur, the District headquarters. The nearest railway station, about 24 km to the east of the valley, is Macherla, the terminus of the broad gauge line from Guntur. Visitors coming either from Hyderabad or Guntur are to reach the jetty point in Vijayapuri south on the right bank of Nagarjuna sagar dam. Vijayapuri south is also connected by regular bus-services with Hyderabad, Guntur and Macherla.

The ruins of structures of ancient Nagarjunakonda are now represented by the salvaged monuments reconstructed in areas above the submergence-level. While the main concentration of such monuments, including the open-air replicas of excavated remains is on the island, the other group, connected by the bus-route from Nagarjunakonda and Macherla, is to be seen near Anupu, on the eastern bank of the reservoir.

The accommodation at the hilltop is no longer maintained and the two rest houses of the Department were converted into field offices. In view of the safety and security over stay on the hilltop is not allowed. The Andhra Pradesh Tourism

Development Corporation maintains a tourist hotel called 'Punnami' with AC and non–AC accommodation opposite the launch station, besides, some tourist cottages on the right bank, where boarding and lodging facilities are also available for those who wish to stay over night. For reservation one can contact the Manager, Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation V.P. South, or the Chairman and Managing Director, A.P. T.D.C., Tourism House, 3-5-891, Himayat Nagar, Hyderabad 500029. Tel. No. 23261833; Fax No. 04023261801 e-mail emd@aptourism.com. At Hill Colony, there are tourist cottages at Vijayavihar and Project House.

Guide books and picture post cords are available at the counter of the Archaeological Museum, Nagarjunakonda. Photographs of the sites and antiquities can be obtained on payment from the office of the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, Janapath, New Delhi-110 011. For further information one can contact the Superintending Archaeologist, Hyderabad Circle, Kendriyasadan III floor, II block, Sultan Bazar, Koti, Hyderabad-500095 (A.P.)

2. DISCOVERY AND SUBMERGENCE

NAGARJUNA-KONDA OR NAGARJUNA'S HILL,[1] NOW transformed into an island, is situated on the right bank of the river Krishna. The valley, now completely submerged under water, also came to be known by the same name. The name 'Nagarjunakonda' is of medieval origin and is often conterminous with the hill-fort perched on the hill. In ancient times, as the inscriptions of the third-fourth centuries show, the valley was known by the name Vijayapurī.[2] The hypothetical association of Nāgārjuna, the celebrated Buddhist philosopher of the second century A.D., with the hill or the valley has not been established on the basis of either archaeological finds or inscrutable literary tradition. The name Vijayapúrī is possibly after Vijaya Sātakarṇi, the Sātavāhana ruler (below, p. 74), who may have been the real founder of the township.

Nagarjunakonda was a secluded valley, about 23 square km in area, completely shut in on three sides by surrounding hills, all of them being off-shoots of the Nallamalai Range ('Black Hill'), and on the fourth by the river Krishna. In the inscriptions of the Ikshvāku rulers Vijayapurī is mentioned always in relation to Śrīparvata (*Siripavate Vijayapure*), which appears to be the ancient name of the Nallamalai Range.

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[1] *Koṇḍa* in Telugu means 'hill'.

[2] The colony that has grown around the Nagarjunasagar Dam has been named after it.

The rich archaeological wealth of the valley spread over a vast area remained unknown till March, 1926, when A. R. Saraswati, Telugu Assistant to the Archaeological Superintendent for Epigraphy, Archaeological Survey of India, made the discovery of this remarkable site. By that time, it had already attracted the notice of a few local enthusiasts as well. This discovery brought on the scene first M. H. Kuraishi, and then A. H. Longhurst, Superintendent, Archaeological Survey of India, Southern Circle; the latter commenced excavation here in 1927 and continued it till February, 1931. As a result of the excavation were discovered a number of Buddhist monasteries and other monuments, besides numerous limestone sculptures. Again in 1938, a minor operation was carried out by T. N. Ramachandran, mostly in the areas already tackled by Longhurst. The sculptures recovered in excavations were kept in a small museum in the valley, now submerged.

These operations had by no means exhausted the potentiality of the site, and so, when the plan to transform the valley into a reservoir was decided, the Archaeological Survey of India made a determined effort to salvage the ruins before the submergence. A special project for extensive excavation was formed in August, 1954, to cope with the extraordinary situation. The project, under R. Subrahmanyam, a Superintendent of the Archaeological Survey of India, succeeded in excavating the entire length and breadth of the valley (pl. XIII) within a short period of six years exposing more than hundred sites ranging in dates from Early Stone Age to the late medieval period. Though the

need for water for irrigation in the region gave no scope to avert the archaeological tragedy, the event gave birth to a new approach to combating the total destruction of the cultural heritage by the reconstitution or transplantation of ruins of monuments. Today's Nagarjunakonda is the outcome of these activities, the like of which is being repeated in salvaging monuments of Nubia threatened due to the construction of the Aswan Dam in Egypt.

In an attempt to recapture the essence of the architectural tradition, a total number of nine monuments, some of them of gigantic proportions, have been rebuilt in their original form and alignment (below, p. 77). While fourteen large replicas of excavated ruins are displayed in the open-air in two clusters on the hill-top (below, p. 78), replicas of some of the excavated sites, arranged around a miniature model of the valley, are to be seen inside the Museum (below, p. 76).

3. EARLY REMAINS

A. Remains of the Stone Ages

The Early Stone Age peoples living in the valley some two hundred thousand years ago were food-gatherers living almost in a sub-human state of existence. Several such groups in the past might have trekked the valley in their unending quest for food. They used crude stone tools like handaxes or points, cleavers, scrapers, and so on, made out of quartzite pebbles; these artefacts belong typologically to a wider peninsular complex known to archaeologists as Madras handaxe industry. Such specimens of tools along with a large quantity of discards, none of them indicating transportation from elsewhere, came to light in the excavation at Site 128; they were found resting on a pebble-bed overlying an ancient bank, possibly of the river Krishna.

The remains of the succeeding Middle Stone Age are represented by tools like blades, points or arrowheads and scrapers, made either on quartzite or jaspery chert. These tools, collected from the surface, are comparatively smaller in size than those of the Early Stone Age, and the technique employed in their manufacture shows marked advancement over the earlier tradition. Yet their economy remained as that of hunters and food-gatherers.

In the next Age, the Late Stone Age, the technological development in the manufacture of stone tools

reached considerable perfection. Various harder materials, like quartz, rock-crystal, agate, chalcedony and chert were utilized to make delightful shapes, some of them conforming clearly to geometric forms like triangles, trapezes and lunates. The tradition was clearly dominated by the use of tiny tools, generally known as microliths (below, p. 61). More than one microlith-using people left in the valley their relics which may broadly be divided into two groups, viz., (i) an industry with a pronounced geometric tradition and (ii) another without geometrics. Also, the excavation in the valley revealed both the trends: Site 53 laid bare an assemblage wherein geometric shapes, specially the lunates and other crescentic tools, had a clear preponderance, while Site 45 A exposed an industry characterized by tools like blades, points, lunates, scrapers, etc. Notwithstanding their dexterity in the preparation of tiny tools, these people, leading almost a nomadic life, had hardly any idea of making pottery, and much less, of harnessing animal-power. Both the sites mentioned above, apart from several others known from surface-exploration, were essentially factory-sites located close to the source of raw materials. But the excavations at Nagarjunakonda, like any other Indian site known so far, failed to throw any light on the habitat of the Stone Age people which in all likelihood continued to be only natural shelters or were crude temporary structures.

B. Neolithic settlements

Nagarjunakonda entered into the threshold of rural life with the advent of the neolithic phase some time in the third millennium B.C. Eventually people living in the valley acquired the developed technique of carpentry, rudimentary knowledge of cultivation, the art of domestication of animals and the potter's craft. On the whole, they were not entirely dependent on nature's gift for the supply of food.

The picture that has been drawn above is largely applicable to the most evolved neolithic period of Nagarjunakonda. It was, however, preceded at least by two more stages. Technologically, the earliest neolithic site, Site 45, was still in the microlithic age—short blades of chert constituting the bulk of the finds. Tools like lunates, scrapers, backed blades, points and arrow-heads had their use also. Neolithic tools, only three of them having been found in this period, could have been used for tillage-operation and pots for storage of grains. The pottery, pale reddish-brown in colour and of a very crude fabric, was entirely handmade. The absence of animal-bones in all the strata at Site 45 is likely to suggest that the people living at this site had little idea of the domestication of animals.

The pattern of subsequent development is not easy to visualize, for human activities in the next phase, as noticed at Sites 46 A and 47, confined mainly to the digging of pits, with little or no cultural debris over the ground. Other trends represented the use of a better kind of red ware, the introduction of a burnished grey

ware, the occurrence of large quantity of animal-bones, the presence of disc-beads of shell or steatite paste and comparatively larger flakes of greyish quartzite. Microliths were made not merely on chert but also on rock-crystal, whereas neoliths, though of superior finish, were not profuse. Taking into consideration all this development one is inclined to believe that this phase marked considerable advance over the earlier one.

That a great deal of development took place at Site 46, the most developed neolithic site, in the sphere of potter's art was apparent from the overwhelming quantity of burnished grey ware and a comparatively smaller number of red and black-slipped wares. In shapes too they displayed a great many varieties, which might have developed in response to increasing functional needs. The neolithic settlement here depended also on cultivation as suggested by the use of digging-implements such as shoe-last celts, long weeding-hoes, picks with twin working-edge, and elongated celts. Equally notable was its achievement in the sphere of carpenter's art which made use of tools like axes, adzes, chisels and axe-hammers. During the period, microliths, some of them being exquisite examples of neolithic workmanship, were made almost entirely on rock-crystal; further, quartzite flakes also had a wide currency.

The evolved phase produced abundance of animal-bones, suggesting that large herds of cattle, including the ox, buffalo, goat, were maintained by the inhabitants. The hunting and fishing habits of these people were attested to by the occurrence of bones of spotted deer and fish. These developments portray an economic

stage in which man was seized by an urge to produce more food to meet his needs instead of depending wholly on nature's mercy. The discovery of a few fragments of copper from a pit of this phase may tend to show that they had some knowledge of the use of metals as well. Disc-beads, made either of shell or paste, and a long-barrel-circular bead of jasper indicate, at the same time, the prevalence of finer craft.

The people then lived in houses made on earth-fast poles, each house enclosing one or two pits, meant probably for underground storage-facilities. Side by side semi-subterranean dwellings were probably used by certain groups. However, the most baffling problem of the evolved and the intermediary phases was the occurrence of innumerable pits of different shapes and dimensions. Quite a good number of them were found to have been sealed by boulders, indicating their disuse.

The neolithic people of the evolved phase were no longer nomadic, for excavation at Nagarjunakonda brought to light a neolithic cemetery, Site 68, about 1 km to the west of the habitational area. It had two strata of burial, one superimposed over the other, with an intervening deposit. The early group practised complete extended inhumation burials. In the upper stratum two different practices—complete inhumation and post-excarnation burial—were in vogue, the latter proving to be the most dominant rite. Two instances of joint-burial, each grave containing the skeletons of one adult male and an adult female, came to view from the upper layer. Children were also interred in the cemetery, but infants were buried in urns within

habitational area, after a process of exposure. Grave-furniture in the cemetery comprised almost exclusively pots of burnished grey ware, mostly with spouts.

C. The megaliths

The culture that followed the neolithic phase at Nagarjunakonda, possibly after a considerable time-interval, was represented by two groups of sepulchral monuments (Sites 44 and 63) known to the archaeologists as megaliths, of the second half of the first millennium B.C. In outward appearance the megaliths of Nagarjunakonda were all stone-circles enclosing heaps of stones, below which lay the underground houses of the dead either in the form of simple pits or buried cists, the latter made of dressed stones. While all the tombs here did not yield human remains, post-excarnation burial, i.e. burying a few bones of the dead collected after the exposure of the body, was the most dominant practice, although two examples of complete inhumation also were noticed. In pit-burials, the skeletal remains of more than one individual, often huddled together, were inhumed, generally with head to the north. But the cists, their number being only two, were laid in east-west orientation. One such cist, Megalith I, at Site 44, had four skulls inside it, besides two more outside, but the other example, from Site 63, had only two femurs accompanied by a copper armlet.

Both the cases of complete inhumation burial, were from Site 63 and belonged to adult females. The

one in Megalith XIV had gold spiral earrings and a necklace almost in the same position as they had been originally worn. The other woman, in Megalith XV, carried no earthly vestiges save the burial-pots, presumably containing food and drink for the soul, deposited by her kinsmen. At least three more women were laid to rest in different megaliths of Nagarjunakonda, while the male population, excluding two children, was represented at least by twelve skeletal remains. Thus, a total number of nineteen individuals was recovered from fifteen megaliths, of which nine yielded skeletal remains, and the remaining six producing either only splinters of bone or no human bones at all.

All the megaliths yielded burial-furniture in the shape of numerous pots and iron objects, the latter displaying the war-like habits of the megalith-builders. Their funerary architecture shows that they were adept also in stone works. It was these people who introduced iron in the valley and the characteristic Black-and-red Ware, so called because the pots are black inside and at the rim, and red elsewhere. Their elaborate funeral rites, intermittently spread over a particular period, suggest their deep reverence to the spirit of the dead and a strong belief in the life after death.

4. HISTORICAL MONUMENTS

A. The historical background

The written history ushers in the time of the later Sātavāhanas whose archaeological vestiges are represented by coins belonging to Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi, Pulumāyi, Yajña Sātakarṇi, etc., and the inscription of Gautamīputra Vijaya Sātakarṇi, dated in his sixth regnal year (below, p. 74). No relics ascribable to this period, i.e., the second and early third centuries A.D., have come to light save the limestone pillar over which the above-mentioned inscription is engraved. Yet the contents of the inscription may very well suggest the existence of a Buddhist establishment here, at least, a nucleus of it.

It is, however, certain that Nagarjunakonda did not assume any importance during the rule of the later Sātavāhanas when Dhānyakaṭaka or Dharaṇikota, near Amaravati, was the real epicentre of the Āndhra country. Nagarjunakonda came to limelight only when Vāśishṭhiputra Chāṁtamūla, the founder of the Ikshvāku dynasty, snatched a portion of the kingdom of the tottering Sātavāhanas some time in the second quarter of the third century A.D. The names of four Ikshvāku rulers—Vāśishṭhiputra Chāṁtamūla, Māṭharīputra Virapurushadatta, Vāśishṭhiputra Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla and Vāśishṭhiputra Rudrapurushadatta—are known from epigraphs, which, in addition to their coins (below,

p.56) are the main sources of their dynastic history. These kings might have held their sway in the lower Krishna basin for about hundred years or so. An inscription from the Ashṭabhujasvāmin temple (below, pp. 74-75) provides the name of another king, Vāśishṭhiputra Vasusheṇa, but he belonged to the Ābhīra dynasty of the Nasik region. Perhaps this king extended his territory over this region in about A.D. 278 only for a very brief period. But the aura that Nagarjunakonda has around its name is all due to the brilliant records of achievement accomplished during the short rule of the Ikshvākus, who claimed descent, possibly to raise their status in the eyes of the people, from the mythological Ikshvākus of Ayodhyā. Never before nor afterwards did the valley witness such a spectacular growth as the seat of a government, as an *atelier* of art and as the important centre of Buddhist and Brāhmaṇical faiths.

Chāṁtamūḷa, whose inscriptions came from Rentala and Kesanapalli, in District Guntur, and not a single one from Nagarjunakonda, was a devout Hindu and a worshipper of Kārttikeya, the god of war. The records of his successors extol him as a monarch with indomitable determination and as a great performer of Vedic sacrifices. His sister, Chāṁtaśrī, married to Mahātalavara Skandaśrī of Pūkiya family, was a great patron of Buddhism. She was primarily responsible for constructing the earliest datable Buddhist establishment—the Mahā-chaitya and its allied units of Site 1 (below, p. 31)—during the sixth regnal year of Vīrapurushadatta. Later on this king became the son-in-law of Chāṁtaśrī. Many other Ikshvāku princesses were either

Buddhists or had leanings towards Buddhism despite the fact that all the kings professed Brāhmaṇism. Indeed, but for this eclectic outlook of the Ikshvāku rulers the valley could not have grown as a centre of both Buddhism and Brāhmaṇism.

Māṭharīputra Vīrapurushadatta, son and successor of Chāṁtamūla, ruled for at least twenty-four years. He maintained matrimonial connexions with the king of Vanavāsi in the Karnātaka area and the Śakas of Ujjain. He gave his daughter in marriage to the former and himself married Rudradharabhaṭṭārikā, the daughter of a Śaka Kshatrapa king of Ujjain, possibly Rudrasena II (A.D. 254-74).

Vāśishṭhiputra Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla, son and successor of Vīrapurushadatta, was on the throne for at least twenty-four years. His period marked the golden age of Nagarjunakonda when structural activities and artistic pursuits reached their heights. The cause of Śaivism was then better served than under any other Ikshvāku kings. No less than three Śaiva structures—the Sarvadeva temple, Pushpabhadrasvāmin temple and the shrine of Noḍagīśvarasvāmin (below, pp. 25-27)—were built during his rule. Likewise, Buddhism too received great impetus, for all the evolved monastic establishments that bore the best sculptural representations of the time were the products of this period. By the time of Ehuvala the Saka influence too had had its deep impact on the Ikshvākus, for he not only married Vaṁmabhaṭṭā, a daughter of Mahākshatrapa, but was also succeeded by their son Rudrapurushadatta. Hāritīputra Vīrapurushadatta, who was responsible for

the construction of the Pushpabhadrasvāmin temple, was also a son of Ehuvala by his queen Kapanaśrī. The prince had the titles Mahārājakumāra and Mahāsenāpati, but it is not known whether he had any claims over the Ikshvāku throne or predeceased his father. There are also a few inscriptions of Ehuvala's time wherein the king has been given the characteristic Śaka title *svāmī*. An inscription engraved on the memorial pillar at Site 24, raised in the memory of Rudrapurushadatta's mother—that being the only memorial raised in honour of a lady at Nagarjunakonda (below, p. 75)—mentions the names of all the predecessors by the title *svāmī*. The inscription is dated in the eleventh regnal year of Vāśishṭhiputra Rudrapurushadatta.

It is not known if the Ikshvāku rule in the lower Krishna basin was one of uninterrupted peace and prosperity. The occurrence of heaps of elephant-bones scattered here and there outside the citadel and the inscribed memorial pillars depicting battle-scenes (below, p. 43) are indicative of the fact that the peril of war did rock Vijayapurī at least once. Significantly, the Sarvadeva temple inscription of the time of Ehuvala refers to an army-commander, Aṇikki by name, who is said to have won victories in battle-fields and attained renown. Similarly, the memorial-pillar at Site 36 of Mahāsenāpatī Chāṁtapūḷa, the Kuḷahaka chief (below, p. 44), alludes to certain victories. This as well as a group of inscribed memorial pillars (*chhāyā-stambha*) at Site 113 (below, p. 43), raised in honour of the soldiers who fell in the battle near the citadel, perhaps came into existence

only after an Ikshvāku victory. It is quite likely that all these vestiges bore the testimony of Chāṁtamūla's victory over Vijaya Sātakarṇi. Invariably such memorial pillars, including that of Kuḷahaka Chāṁtapūḷa, are carved with battle-scenes.

That the Ikshvāku supremacy in the lower Krishna basin remained unquestioned for a very long time is evident from intensive structural activity and patronage to fine arts. From datable records it is known that erection of structures in the valley commenced from the sixth regnal year of Vīrapurushadatta and ended in the eleventh regnal year of Rudrapurushadatta.

What happened after the rule of Rudrapurushadatta is still shrouded in obscurity. The rising Pallava power must have swept the lower Krishna basin some time in the middle of the fourth century, and the Ikshvākus might have been reduced to subordinate vassals to live an unknown existence. With the fall of the Ikshvākus Nagarjunakonda relapsed into darkness, its artistic tradition, along with the declining political glory, vanished.

A few centuries later, during the Chālukyan times, a few brick-built square shrines were erected in the valley, but they look like anachronisms in that period of excellent tradition of dry-stone masonry. The focus had by then shifted to Yelleswaram, on the other bank of the Krishna, where a series of pilgrims' records and temples datable to the Chālukyan times (seventh to twelfth centuries A.D.) clearly show the existence of an old Śaiva centre there. The Kākatīyas of Warangal, as the successors of the Chālukyas in the Krishna basin,

must have extended their formal authority over the valley, and there are reasons to believe that after the final defeat of Pratāparudra II (1295-1326), the last Kākatīya ruler, the region formed part of the Delhi Sultanate.

Nagarjunakonda limitedly regained its lost position during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries when Baḥmanī, Vijayanagara and Gajapati kings were trying to establish their respective supremacy in the Krishna-Godavari and Krishna-Pennar *doābs*. The literary and the epigraphical documents of the time allude to the hill-fort of Nagarjunakonda, which was built possibly by the Reḍḍi kings as one of the peripheral garrisons protecting the main stronghold at Koṇḍavīḍu, then the nerve-centre of the lower Krishna delta. The Gajapatis of Orissa were also in occupation of these forts, their authority extending throughout the eastern halves of both the *doābs*, till Kṛishṇadevarāya (1509-29), the greatest ruler of the Vijayanagara empire, in a bid to avenge the earlier defeats of his predecessors, chased the Gajapatis as far back as their own territory. Nagarjunakonda, as a frontier-citadel during the rule of Purushottama Gajapati was under the control of one Śrīnātharāja Siṅgarāyyā Mahāpātra, who had left an inscription, dated 1491, on the Nagarjuna-konda (below, p. 53). If the local tradition contains any truth, Kṛishṇadevarāya had to shell heavily the hill-fort from the neighbouring hill Phirangimotu before he could take its possession. The fort and the valley came under the Quṭb-Shāhī rulers of Golkonda at the time of confusion that ensued the so-called battle of Talikota of 1565,

which dealt a severe blow to the Vijayanagara empire. One of the later rulers of Quṭb-Shāhī family gave away this valley as an *agrahāra* to the Pushpagiri-Maṭh in District Cuddapah. But the hill-fort of Nagarjuna-konda (below, p. 51) practically ceased to play any role after the fall of the Vijayanagara empire.

B. The citadel of the Ikshvākus

The city of Vijayapurī on the right bank of the river Krishna, the capital of the Ikshvāku rulers, had a well thought-out plan, within which civic needs and the security received equal consideration. Never were the Ikshvāku rulers complacent about the hill-barriers which served practically as the capital's first line of defence, for the citadel proper enclosing the king's area had rampart-walls on the three sides save partially on the west, i.e. towards the river. It had two gates, one on the east and the other on the west overlooking the river, besides a postern gate on the north. Though originally made of mud, it was subsequently reinforced with brick. Two hillocks—the Peddakundellagutta on the south and the Chinnakundellagutta on the north—formed part of the enclosed area. Traces of a moat just outside the rampart could be traced at certain places. The structures inside the citadel, although considerably damaged due to intensive ploughing and wanton plunder, comprised residential buildings, barracks, stables, cisterns, baths, and square wells or soak-pits (Sites 90-92, 94-95, 100-104 etc.). Unfortunately it has not been possible to identify with

certainty the palace of the Ikshvākus, yet the complex, the part of which has sometimes been popularly known as the Aśvamedha site (Site 93), was in fact a bathing-establishment attached to a palace-complex. The site had two ornamental tanks, provided with underground drains, besides a number of wells and paved cisterns. Near by were unearthed the remains of a few spacious rooms arranged in north-south alignment. A thick wall on its west, the second thickest brick-wall of the valley, formed part of the ruins of the palace. The square stepped tank (pl. IX) with arrangement for overflow of water—the extra water was diverted through a passage on the top joining ultimately with a very long covered underground drain—had originally a wooden superstructure having lamps, hooks, and so on as internal fixtures. This fine building was completely destroyed by fire, for in the course of excavation inside the tank, which itself showed signs of fire, had been discovered a large quantity of ash, charcoal, burnt iron objects, burnt tiles with impressions of wood-fibre—all indicative of conflagration. Close to it on the south was unearthed a tortoise-shaped stepped tank connected by an underground drain on either side with two square wells or soak-pits. The area was exceptionally rich in portable antiquities, including pottery.

C. Residential houses

The common people forming the bulk of the population had their residences (Sites 58, 69, 72, 87, 89, 109, 112, 115, 117-119) outside the citadel. Their houses were

represented mostly by rubble compound-walls, with their largest concentration towards the east of the king's area. A few of them enclosed houses consisting of rooms in one alignment, with a common verandah. Generally houses were made of rubble, mud serving as the binding-material. Some of them were shops or centres of craft. One of the rubble-built houses disclosed a goldsmith's entire stock-in-trade (below, p. 58). Another house in Site 58 brought to light a hoard of gold ornaments comprising earring and a necklace with a Roman coin as pendant. It may be mentioned here that settlements of the residential houses followed a linear pattern in their arrangement and that they were constructed along broad roads intercepted by cross-roads and by-lanes.

The rubble-built structures had their counterparts also in brick (Site 74), though the number of the latter was small. One such building (Site 48) came to light on the bank of an ancient canal. It seemed to have had a flat-roof of Cuddapah slabs covered with a thick coat of lime. On the other hand, rubble-built structures, including *vihāras*, had generally roofs made of tiles. Another type of building-plan consisted of rooms or halls arranged all around a central *maṇḍapa* (Site 49), very much similar to the quadrangular monasteries of Nagarjunakonda and elsewhere. Perhaps this plan was followed by the richer people including merchants.

The merchant-community which took active part in the building of monasteries and temples must have had its colony somewhere in the valley. There is an inscription from Site 126 to show that a *śreshṭhin* headed the citizens' council (*śreshṭhipramukha-nigama*). There

were many guilds of traders like the guild of confectioners, sellers or growers of leaves, masons, and artisans. That the valley had a flourishing shell-cutter's industry located generally near the Brāhmaṇical shrines is evident from the discovery of a large quantity of bangle pieces of shell in different stages of manufacture and their rejects. Perhaps there were several other guilds, like those of brick-layers, tile-manufacturers, potters, blacksmiths and so on. Moreover, there were unproductive people like monks and ascetics, poets and scribes, dancers and musicians, wrestlers and other entertainers.

D. Other secular remains

Besides residential houses and shops, the valley had several other types of buildings, of which the most imposing one was the Amphitheatre, Site 17 (pl. II), with tiered gallery on all the four sides and providing seating-room for about thousand spectators. It is a unique example of architecture in ancient India and was probably inspired by some Roman tradition. Enclosing a rectangular area (16·46 × 13·72 m), the brick-built structure, entirely cased with stone slabs, had at least sixteen tiers and open to the sky. The fact that it had some acoustic properties in that any sound produced in the pit could be heard elsewhere may indicate that it was meant more for musical or dramatic performances than for gladiatorial fights or the like entertainments. But as several sculptural representations of wrestling-scenes came from Nagarjunakonda, it could have been used for sports as well.

The playing of dice or similar games appear to have been a favourite pastime of the people as the games-boards on the casing-slabs of the Bathing ghat, Site 34 (pl. I), and Burning ghat, Site 126 (below, p. 25) show. There were at least two platforms, made of diagonally placed bricks, one within the citadel and the other near Site 70, meant probably for playing dice. A complex identified as public assembly-hall, Site 71, had to its north a brick-built platform which, like the other two platforms mentioned above, yielded a die. Evidently, these were public places for the people to gather and spend their leisure-hours. It may also be presumed from the foregoing that such places of recreations were mostly open-air spots close to some temples or public edifices. On the other hand, Site 37, wrongly identified earlier as a palace, was a place of recreation of different class. From the scenes of drinking and dancing carved on the pillars of this edifice one may identify it as some sort of a club—with Śaka men and women figuring prominently in the scenes.

A novel feature of the Ikshvāku town-planning was the existence of wayside rest-houses, more than a dozen in number (Sites 13, 18, 36, 39 A, 50, 70, 81, 88, 107, 111, 114 and 121) at important points inside the city. They were flat-roofed pillared halls, rarely with any other adjuncts—the number of limestone pillars varying in each case from sixteen to thirty-six.

No less significant was the occurrence of baths (Sites 19, 70 A and 100)—in all probability used as public baths—each consisting generally of an oblong cistern,

a well and a soak-pit, sometimes even connected with open or underground drains.

Excavations along the river-bank and in and around the citadel exposed several wells, oblong in shape, and two masonry tanks (Sites 64 and 122) for ceremonial use. The Ikshvākus tried to fight the water-problem in several ways. It is no doubt difficult to date several bunds (Sites 42 and 66) to impound rain-water, but a canal (Site 19 A), about 9·14 m wide and 1·82 m deep, along the foot of the Phirangimotu hill must have been excavated during Ikshvāku times. Traced to a length of about 1 km, it had rubble-built ramps on both the sides. On its either bank stood many a lofty structure including the giant Amphitheatre described above.

E. Brāhmaṇical temples

(i) *The structures*

The Brāhmaṇical temples of the Ikshvāku period came up mostly around the citadel and on the bank of the *uttaravāhinī* Krishna. Of the nine temples around the citadel, five stood on its western side verging the river and no less than ten further upstreams. It is not possible to identify all the temples and fix precisely their dates, but at least half a dozen of them provided inscriptions or icons to ascertain their affiliation and the approximate periods of their construction. Five of them were undoubtedly Śaiva, meant for either Śiva, Kārttikeya or Devasenā, the consort of Kārttikeya, while Vaishṇavism was represented by a solitary example. Nagarjunakonda had also a temple of mother-goddess.

The Vishṇu temple (Site 29) was that of the Ashṭabhujasvāmin (pl. III) installed in A.D. 278 during the period of Ābhīra contact. Situated at the foot of the Siddhuladari hill, the temple enshrined, as the inscription records, a wooden image of eight-armed Vishṇu placed on an inscribed stone pedestal. Incidentally, this appears to be the earliest reference to such a form of Vishṇu so far known in India. The name of the diety is found inscribed on one of the several conch-shells discovered at the site (below, p. 75), the design of a *chakra*-capital being engraved by the side of the epigraph. Evidently the temple with its two sanctuaries—one oblong and the other apsidal, each fronted by a pillared hall apart from the independent one of larger dimensions at their back—had a *dhvaja-stambha* or flag-staff surmounted by a *chakra* or wheel. Two exquisitely-carved pillars mostly with secular scenes were recovered from this site (below, p.60).

Proceeding upstream for more than two kilometres from this Vishṇu temple, on the western foot of the Nagarjuna-konda were discovered a number of structures including the shrine of Noḍagīśvarasvāmin, possibly a form of Śiva, at Site 127. The inscription on the *dhvaja-stambha* says that the *devakula* or the temple came into existence during the rule of Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla, although it is silent about the form of deity housed inside the oblong cella. A pillared hall near by, Site 126, has been identified as the Burning ghat in view of the occurrence of two beautiful sculptures, one showing a lady lying in state and the other graphically depicting

a scene reminiscent of a *sati*-burning (below, pp.71-72). From this region was also discovered a large-sized inscribed stone-image of the mother-goddess. That mother-goddess formed a popular cult during this time is apparent from several miniature terracotta figurines recovered in the excavation. In superficial appearance the image resembles a *pūrṇa-kumbha* or 'filled jar' decorated with flowers and foliage, but a closer examination would show that it represents actually the female figure in a squatting posture (below, p.60).

Another group of shrines grew around the Bathing ghat (Site 34), which itself was a wonder of Ikshvāku architecture (pl.I). Entirely cased with Cuddapah slabs, this gigantic ghat on the Krishna was perhaps more religious than secular in character for reasons of its location near the Pushpabhadrasvāmin temple and an oblong Kārttikeya shrine. While the former identification is based on the lithic record discovered at the site, the latter yielded remains of a mutilated icon of Kārttikeya. However, the possibility of both the shrines forming a single unit cannot be ruled out. The icon of Śiva alluded to in the *dhvaja-stambha* inscription as Mahādeva Pushpabhadrasvāmin was enshrined in the apsidal temple built during the fourteenth regnal year of Ehuvala by his son prince Vīrapurushadatta. A huge stepped masonry-tank, with a pavilion on the west (Site 122), situated close to this group of temples, had ceremonial use, perhaps as *teppakuḷam*, where the annual floating-festival of the gods was to take place. Within a stone's throw once stood majestically, at Site 99, the storeyed palatial temple (pl. IV) of Sarvadeva

or 'the abode of all gods', constructed by the commander Eliśrī in the eleventh regnal year of Ehuvala. Six or seven versions of the same inscription, written in metrical Sanskrit, the first of its kind at Nagarjunakonda, were affixed on the pillars of this temple.

Slightly beyond the Sarvadeva temple and not far away from the western gate of the citadel was unearthed at Site 97 another temple-complex with two apsidal shrines without any inscription or image. The next temple, Site 82, with a square *garbha-gṛiha* and an L-shaped pillared hall belonged definitely to Kārttikeya whose mutilated image was recovered from the monument. Anoter temple, Site 83, consisted of a rectangular shrine, an apsidal structure and an underground chamber, came from the south-western corner of the citadel. Two more unidentified temples, Sites 74 and 80, each comprising a rectangular shrine with a pillared hall in front, stood on the river bank between Site 83 and the spot in front of Yelleswaram on the other bank of the river.

Between Sites 74 and 80 was laid bare a magnificent edifice, Site 78, yielding some masterpieces of Ikshvāku art. The site exposed to view two or more apsidal shrines in a row surrounded by an oblong railed enclosure, besides a group of eight subsidiary structures in the form of oblong, circular, square and octagonal bases around the pillared *maṇḍapa* and the main shrines. There were two monastery-like structures to the south of this complex, both interconnected. While its affiliation is uncertain, it was more likely to be Brāhmaṇical

than Buddhist due to the occurrence of a subsidiary *maṇḍapa* inside the main *maṇḍapa* and its location on the river bank. Whatever affiliation may be, the sculptured rail carved out of blocks of stone should be considered as an outstanding piece of architecture reflecting the mature plastic tradition of the Ikshvākus.

It is evident from the foregoing that the river bank was dotted with a large number of Brāhmaṇical shrines, many of them coming to existence during the rule of Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla. The emphasis on the Śaiva cult was also markedly manifest. Of the shrines that grew around the citadel, Site 39 has been identified as that of Devasenā. The temple comprising an oblong cella and a *maṇḍapa* stood on the south-eastern corner of the citadel as one of the guardian-deities of the fortress. Site 35, on the northern corner of the citadel, had an apsidal shrine with a *maṇḍapa* in front. The largest temple-complex, Site 64, measuring about 148 m square, was situated about 75 m to the south of Site 39. Its main sanctum was apsidal on plan with an ancillary oblong shrine to the south and a masonry tank, *Dadhisara*, on the north. The structure perhaps belonged to the time of Vīrapurushadatta. The temple outlived the Ikshvākus, as is evident from the pilgrims' records of a later date engraved on the pillars of the subsidiary shrine.

An oblong temple at Site 84, with a *maṇḍapa* in front, was in use even after the Ikshvākus, for one of its *maṇḍapa*-pillars bore pilgrims' records in characters of the seventh century. Three or four shrines dedicated to Kārttikeya, with a stepped well, at Site 57, the group

enclosed by a compound-wall, were built in the post-Ikshvāku period. That the valley continued to be a centre of Brāhmaṇical religion down to medieval times may be assumed from the existence of square Śiva shrines at Sites 33 and 75.

Far beyond the actual locale of the Brāhmaṇical temples, almost on the road once leading into the valley, exists a complex, Site 56, comprising an oblong sanctum, with entrance from the east, and a *maṇḍapa* in front. This is the only site that has escaped submergence and can be seen on the eastern bank of the reservoir near the eleventh milestone from Macherla. A subsidiary shrine, almost square on plan, came up at a later date to the right-hand side of the entrance into the main sanctum. The lower half of a female deity seated in *pralamba-pāda*, with legs dangling down from a raised seat, came from the later shrine. The deity is generally identified with Hāritī, though it would be safe to take her as the consort of some god whose image was once placed in the *garbha-gṛiha*.

(ii) *Architecture*

Nagarjunakonda has yielded the earliest remains of Brāhmaṇical temples so far known in the south and they represent, so to say, a forgotten chapter in the history of Brāhmaṇical architecture. One can now easily visualize the pattern of architectural development of temples during the early Christian eras. Further, a close similarity of the Brāhmaṇical tradition of the valley with that of the Buddhist can hardly escape a critical eye.

Architecturally, the Brāhmaṇical shrines did not follow any set pattern; broadly speaking, they may be divided into two groups, viz., units (i) with a single shrine and (ii) more than one shrine, each one fronted by a pillared hall. The former may be sub-divided into oblong, apsidal and square, whereas the latter includes two sub-types, viz., double apsidal shrines and complex with both rectangular and apsidal structures. In the third group comes the palace-temple of Sarvadeva designated in the inscriptions as *prāsāda* as opposed to *devakula* of the inscriptions from the Pushpabhadrasvāmin and Noḍagīśvarasvāmin temples. Generally, the entrance into the temple was from the east, though examples, with entrance from the west, as in the Pushpabhadrasvāmin temple, or from the north, were also available.

But the variations in plan have neither any cult-affiliation nor is due to any temporal sequence. Both apsidal as well as oblong plans enjoyed almost equal popularity, but square shrines so common in the medieval period seemed to have started just then. All the temples were of brick, while stone played a dominant role in the construction of *maṇḍapas*; in the Sarvadeva temple, however, wood was also used.

On the basis of the extant plans not much can be said about the elevations of the temples. But obviously, the *maṇḍapas*, standing on carved limestone pillars (*stambha*), had flat roofs. For the apsidal shrines one may imagine a *gaja-pṛishṭhākāra* ('elephant's back') or barrel-vaulted top, but square or oblong ones had probably flat roofs, with the *maṇḍapas* almost as high as the *garbha-gṛihas*. The paucity of sculptured fragments

from the temple-sites may also indicate that the walls enclosing the sanctum were mostly devoid of artistic embellishments.

F. Buddhist establishments

(i) *The structures*

More than thirty Buddhist establishments belonging to various sects and schools came up in the valley within a short span of hundred years or so. Inscriptions have provided the names of at least four Buddhist sects inhabiting here viz., Apara-mahāvinaseliya, Bahuśrutīya (Site 5), Mahīśāsaka (Site 7-8) and the Mahāvihāra-vāsin (Site 36). The Apara-mahāvinaseliyas, with at least two establishments (Sites 1 and 9) to their credit, was the dominant sect. Together with the Bahuśrutīyas, they were off-shoots of the Mahāsāṅghikas, while the Mahāvihāra-vāsins, a sect from Sri Lanka, and the Mahīśāsakas represented the orthodox tradition. There might have been other sects or sub-sects inhabiting the valley, but their names are not available.

The Buddhist monuments of Nagarjunakonda were spread throughout the valley except the river bank, with an early concentration in the central region around the Chula-Dhaṁmagiri, a doleritic dyke. All the datable structures here sprang up in between the sixth and the eighteenth regnal years of Vīrapurushadatta and the members of the royal family took active part in constructing them.

Central part.—The Mahā-chaitya (Site 1), the earliest dated structure of Nagarjunakonda, and its

allied units took about a decade to reach its final form, and all the time it received the munificence of the pious lady Chāṁtaśrī, the sister of Vāśishṭhiputra Chāṁtamūla, although the actual construction was done under the supervision of one the Reverend Ānanda. Built in the sixth regnal year of Vīrapurushadatta, the *stūpa* (pl. V), wheel-shaped on plan, had a diameter of about 27·5 m, with *āyaka*-platforms surmounted by *āyaka*-pillars at the four cardinal directions.

Basically, it was a *śārīrika* (corporeal) *stūpa*, for it disclosed a reliquary including a tooth-relic, and the inscription alludes to it as the *dhātu* or bodily remains of Buddha (*saṁma-Saṁbudhasa dhātuvara-parigahita*). The *mahā-vihāra* and the apsidal *chaitya-gṛiha* (*stūpa*-shrine), meant for a much smaller *stūpa* were set up respectively in the fifteenth and the eighteenth regnal years of the same king for the Apara-mahāvinaseliya sect. Some establishments nearby were built between the sixth and the fifteenth regnal years, for one Bodhiśrī, a lay-worshipper from Govagāma, donated an apsidal *stūpa*-shrine in the fourteenth regnal year of Vīrapurushadatta to the Ceylonese monastery (Site 43) on the Chula-Dhaṁmagiri. Besides the apsidal shrine, the establishment had a four-winged monastery, with a Buddha-shrine added to it later on, and a *stūpa* having a brick-built rim around an interior packed with rubble.

On another summit overlooking the one mentioned above stood a monastery, Site 14, with a four-spoked *stūpa* fronted by a three-winged monastery enclosing a pillared hall. In this locality were raised two more establishments: one, Site 20, with a rubble *stūpa* and a two

winged monastery and the other, Site 21, comprising a brick-built *stūpa* with eight spokes and a three-winged *vihāra*. From the latter were recovered Buddhist relics.

All the establishments so far mentioned had no apsidal *chaitya-gṛiha* or image-shrine in their earliest phase; in fact, apsidal temples meant for enshrining the *stūpa* at Sites 1 and 43 (pl. VI) as well as the image-chapel of Site 43 were later additions. But for the occurrence of miniature *stūpas*, some of them definitely votive in character, Sites 6 and 15 were almost similar on plan to Sites 14, 20 and 21. In the plan of these establishments one finds the beginning of Buddhist architecture at Nagarjunakonda, when apsidal *chaitya-gṛihas* or image-shrines did not form an integral part of the monasteries. Such a monastic layout was common more in the central than in other parts of the valley. Another characteristic of this locality was the occurrence of isolated *stūpas* (Sites 15 A, 16 and 22) unconnected with any other structure. These were possibly of the *auddeśika* type raised in honour of the Great Master.

There is, however, no reason to assume that the type of monastery mentioned above did not occur in other localities. For instance, Sites 27 and 32 B, situated amidst a group of highly evolved units had no shrine for Buddha or a central *maṇḍapa*, both the sites being associated with *stūpas* having no *āyaka*-platforms (cardinal projections). On the other hand, the central part did expose highly developed units as well. Thus, Site 4, close to the Chula-Dhaṁmagiri, yielded a monastery with a *stūpa* built on a high platform accompanied by double *chaitya-gṛihas*, one meant for a *stūpa* and the other

for Buddha. An inscribed potsherd found from its monastery calls it *Nākatara-vihāra.*

Site 5, meant for the Bahuśrutīya sect, was another developed monastery constructed in the second regnal year of Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla by his mother Bhaṭṭidevī. Situated at the northern foot of the Nagarjuna-konda it had prominent *stūpa*, with an eight-spoked base and two apsidal chapels, both meant for enshrining *stūpas*. At a slightly later date, at least one oblong shrine, with decorated pillar in front, was built within the residential part of the monastery. Another noteworthy feature of the establishment was the presence of three special chambers, two of which were circular externally and square internally and the third was oblong. These chambers were probably meant for the dignitaries of the monastery, who preferred separate cells of their own. It was a fairly large monastic unit with provision for about thirty monks to live in.

AROUND THE CITADEL.—Out of about nine monastic units, viz., Sites 7-8, 9, 38, 59, 85, 86, 105, 106 and 108, which grew around the citadel, at least three yielded inscriptions of the time of Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla. Taken collectively, this group appears to be more developed than most of the *vihāras* located in the central part of the valley. Site 9, the earliest dated structure of this series, was an Apara-mahāvinaseliya monastery (pl. VII), renovated, if not first built, during the eighth regnal year of Ehuvala. It differed from the Mahāchaitya complex, belonging to the same sect, in having a well-knit plan, and also in the emergence of an additional apsidal shrine meant for enshrining the image of

Buddha. The shrine in front of the eight-spoked *stūpa* had two miniature *stūpas* as well. Like other important *stūpas* it disclosed relics, the pot enclosing the reliquary being kept at the junction of the drum and the *āyaka*-platform on the eastern side.

The Mahīśāsaka monastery (Site 7-8), situated on a hillock adjacent to the Nagarjuna-konda was built in the eleventh regnal year of Ehuvala by his sister Koḍabaliśrī, the queen of the *mahārāja* of Vanavāsi. One of the *stūpas* here yielded relics finally lodged in a terracotta casket. The site had a unique feature of double *stūpa*, without a shrine or a *chaitya-gṛiha*, as this sect remained all along the true adherents of orthodox principles. On the other hand, the Mahāvihāravāsins of Site 38, a Theravādin sect from Sri Lanka, in some period of their history, adapted the practice of raising *chaitya-gṛihas*, in spite of the fact that they clung to the other mode of solid construction of the *stūpa* instead of following the wheel-shaped pattern with *āyaka*-platforms. Even the sect from Sri Lanka living at the Chula-Dhaṁmagiri-vihāra (Site 43) adapted more or less the same mode of *stūpa*-construction. But the *stūpa* of Site 38, built on a raised platform, was surrounded by a four-winged *vihāra*, without a central *maṇḍapa*.

A few metres to the north of the Mahāvihāravāsin monastery was situated a monastic unit, Site 106, which revealed an inscription dated in the twenty-fourth regnal year of Ehuvala. The inscription records the gift of a carved frieze by one Kumāranandin, a member of the merchant-community. The establishment in its

most developed form consisted of a four-winged monastery, a *stūpa* with an eight-spoked base built on a square platform and a *chaitya-gṛiha* constructed possibly in the twenty-fourth regnal year of Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla. Apart from the four miniature *stūpas* at the four corners of the *stūpa*-platform, a separate enclosure to the west included four more examples, possibly votive in character.

At some distance to the west from the above-mentioned site came a small unit, Site 105, with a four-spoked *stūpa* and a three-winged monastery consisting of only nine cells, besides a small square Buddha-chapel added to it later on. Site 108, opposite the Mahāvihāravāsin monastery (Site 38) was still smaller in size. It had only one wing, comprising five cells, a small-sized *stūpa*, without any *āyaka*-platform, and a *chaitya-gṛiha* of comparatively greater dimensions. The most interesting feature of this *stūpa* was the arrangement of bricks in the centre in the shape of a *svastika*, a characteristic observed also at Site 59 situated close to the Aparamahāvinaseliya monastery at Site 9. Yet the best specimen of *svastika* came from Site 20 which was a *stūpa* built of rubble.

Sites 85 and 86 were located just outside the southern rampart-wall. The latter was Nagarjunakonda's smallest unit having a small *stūpa*, with only two cells. Site 85, standing on a lower level, was one of the most developed monasteres here. This was the only unit where both the *chaitya-gṛihas*—one oblong and the other apsidal—enshrined the images of Buddha. The central *maṇḍapa*, its pillars being numbered serially, was enclosed by a three-winged monastery revealing at least

two structural phases, while the *stūpa*, with an eight-spoked base, stood slightly away from the *vihāra* proper.

NORTH-EASTERN PART.—The north-eastern part of the valley, exposing no less than ten monastic units—Sites 2, 3, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 30, 32 A and 32 B—was as rich in Buddhist monuments as the central. Of them, only one, Site 24 (pl. VIII), was associated with a dated inscription, and this may easily be ascribed as one of the latest Buddhist monasteries of Nagarjunakonda, constructed possibly in the eleventh regnal year of Rudrapurushadatta. Architecturally, it disclosed two new trends: the circular image-shrine, located with a four-winged monastery and a memorial-pillar opposite a *stūpa-chaitya* raised in honour of the king's mother. The latter embodied a rather unusual practice and may suggest a complete subordination of the Buddhist church of the time to the royal family. Like other evolved complexes, its *stūpa*, with an eight-spoked base, was built on a square platform.

Site 23, situated very close to the above establishment, had a rubble *stūpa*, with an *āyaka*-platform, besides a separate enclosure in front used for rearing miniature *stūpas*. The apsidal shrine raised within the residential enclosure had an imposing look. Equally impressive was the monastery proper with accommodation for about twenty-three monks. In all likelihood it had no shrine for the image of Buddha.

In many respects Site 26 was comparable with the Bahuśrutīya-vihāra at Site 5. Besides the double *chaitya-gṛiha* each meant for a *stūpa*, it too had two chambers, externally circular and internally square, inside a three-

winged monastery. The other site, Site 28, was represented by the remains of a *stūpa* and a few monastic cells, all of rubble.

Sites 2, 3 and 32 A produced a rich harvest of sculptures and carved architectural pieces but no datable epigraph. A fragmentary pillar-inscription from Site 32 A does not throw any light on the date of its construction. Yet the use of metrical Sanskrit in the epigraph is likely to show that the monastery here was not earlier than the eleventh regnal year of Ehuvala when the Sanskrit inscription of the Sarvadeva temple-inscription was composed. In the layout of the building it exhibited certain developed features like a refectory, store-rooms and a twofold division of the *vihāra* proper. The actual residential part consisted of a four-winged *vihāra* around a central *maṇḍapa*, apart from an oblong Buddha-shrine located inside it. The other part of the monastery, beyond the refectory, was to be approached through a narrow passage. There were only two monastic wings here comprising eight cells. Towards the south of the monastery lay a huge open space, though enclosed by walls, within which were three chambers, circular externally but square internally, arranged in a row. But the most interesting feature of this establishment was the occurrence of a six-spoked *stūpa*, with usual *āyaka*-platforms. Site 30, situated close by, yielded the other example of six-spoked *stūpa*, with a monastery of only three cells.

Site 3 was as much developed in architectural plans as Site 32 A, with the difference that it had a double *chaitya-gṛiha*, one for a *stūpa* and the other for

an image of Buddha, both located inside the monastery. It too had a refectory and a store-room besides a bath, the drain of which was connected with an underground soakage-pit. In the construction of the *stūpa* the authors of the monastery adopted the usual eight-spoked base. Site 2, though quite compact in its layout, had no refectory or bath, and not even the central *maṇḍapa*. Here the two *chaitya-gṛihas* stood inside the three-winged monastery practically overshadowing the main *stūpa* of eight-spoked base. Sites 27 and 32 B, both without any *chaitya-gṛiha*, had none of the characteristics of a developed monastery. The *stūpas* at both the sites were without any *āyaka*-platforms, although Site 27 yielded a four-spoked base. Site 32 B had its rubble *stūpa* built on a square platform, without any shrine or a central *maṇḍapa*. It appears that both these units belonged to some Theravādin sect who did not subscribe to the idea of image-worship till the last days of their stay in the valley.

Eastern part.—Only a few establishments, Sites 51, 52 and 54, sprang up in this part of the valley. Of them, Site 52 comprised only a four-spoked *stūpa* unconnected with any *vihāra*, while Site 51 had no *stūpa* at all, its primary edifice being an apsidal shrine with a *stūpa* and almost-vanished remains of a monastery. But Site 54 revealed a four-winged monastery, with a pillared hall in the centre and a four-spoked *stūpa* with *āyaka*-platforms.

The remains of a monastic wing, with a flight of steps leading up the hill, were discovered on the western slope of the Phirangimotu hill. It was situated

close to the Amphitheatre and the so-called Hāritī temple, the construction of which might have greatly damaged the ruins of an earlier monastery. Yet the discovery of an inscription referring to some gift to the Apara-mahāvinaseliya sect from the area around the Hāritī temple is likely to indicate the existence of the third monastery belonging to this sect.

The so-called Hāritī temple consisting of at least three square shrines, one of them yielding a badly-mutilated image of a female deity, and a pillared *maṇḍapa* was built on an artificially-raised hillock, below which lay the ruins of some brick structures belonging possibly to the Ikshvāku times. Evidently the temple should be dated posterior to the Ikshvāku period; the occurrence of so many square shrines would give additional support to this guess. But it is difficult to identify the image correctly because of the absence of any emblem or vehicle (*vāhana*); most likely, the deity represented some aspect of the mother-goddess.

(ii) *Architecture*

Nagarjunakonda provides an important landmark in the history of Buddhist architecture in India. Several trends from different directions converged in this valley to give rise to new architectural forms, also conditioned to a great extent by ideologies that different sects professed. Broadly speaking, the architectural tradition had the reflection of two broad divisions of the Buddhist church—one adhering to the orthodox principles and the other drifting more and more towards the Mahāyānic

ideals. The former till their last day in the valley withstood the tide of image-worship and the concomitant concept of temple.

In the beginning the Buddhist establishments of Nagarjunakonda consisted mainly of a *stūpa* and a *vihāra* for monks to live in; all early Buddhist settlements in India followed more or less a similar pattern. The idea of apsidal shrines, which might have come into the valley from western India, effected the first change in the traditional set-up. In the Gandhāra sites of the north-west, however, several innovations must have taken place prior to Nagarjunakonda; the idea of quadrangular monastery, square or oblong image-shrine, pillared hall for congregational purposes, miniature *stūpa*, and square platform for the *stūpa* penetrated into the valley largely from that direction. All these trends combined together to give birth to a new monastic layout. Thus, the most developed complex of Nagarjunakonda consisted of a *stūpa* built on a square platform, flanked by two apsidal shrines, and a quadrangular monastery enclosing a pillared hall. The practices of rearing miniature *stūpas* and the construction of oblong shrines were not, however, universally accepted by the Buddhist community of the valley.

But in the construction of the *stūpa* all the sites of Nagarjunakonda followed the same old style in the form of hemispherical dome resting on a low drum, though the *stūpa* enshrined in the *chaitya-gṛihas* had invariably a high cylindrical drum, the entire thing being cased with stones. Yet one finds here a revolutionary change in the mode of *stūpa*-construction. The wheel-shaped

plan, which may be an outcome of a long series of experiments in different parts of India including Āndhra-deśa, reached its perfection in the hands of the Nagarjunakonda architects. In such wheel-shaped plan one may notice not only an improvement over an earlier building-tradition but also a successful attempt at transforming an idea, a sacred Buddhist symbol into an architectural entity. That ideology influenced the form of *stūpa* in the valley is evident also from the examples with *svastika*-inset in the centre.

Another notable contribution of Nagarjunakonda to *stūpa*-architecture is the practice of providing *āyaka*-platforms at four cardinal directions. Each such platform was to be surmounted by inscribed or uninscribed pillars, five in number, each one as if symbolizing one of the five important episodes of Buddha's life, viz., Birth, Great Renunciation, Enlightenment, First Sermon and Extinction. It must be remembered that *āyaka*-platforms were not an invariable feature of the *stūpas*, as the excavations brought to light *stūpas* without *āyakas* also. Likewise, *stūpas* with a solid core, either made of brick or stone, existed in the valley side by side with the wheel-shaped ones, with spokes varying from four, six, eight to ten. Many of the *stūpas* had their drum-portion encased with sculptured slabs, fixed in lime-mortar on the brick-surface. A peculiar phenomenon of the *stūpa*-architecture of Nagarjunakonda is the occasional presence of railing, in spite of the fact that in plastic representations *stūpas* are shown invariably with an outer rail. A few rail-components like uprights, copings and cross-bars that came to light in

the excavations by Longhurst are mostly specimens of plain, uninscribed railing. However, Sites 3 and 32 A, apart from Site 78 of probable Brāhmaṇical association, produced traces of sculptured railings (below, p. 72).

G. Memorial pillars

The tradition of raising *chhāyā-stambhas* or memorial-pillars to commemorate the death of some important personage assumed wide vogue during the Ikshvāku period, for no less than twenty-two examples, some of them almost intact, came to light in the excavation. All of them bear inscriptions, and most are carved with scenes from the life of the dead. On the basis of the available epigraphs one may easily conclude that the practice was not confined to the rulers and the nobles but was followed also by the artisans and religious personages. For instance, the memorial-pillar near Site 56 was installed in honour of one Koḍaraka who is described in the inscription as *araka-bhaḍaraka* (Sanskrit *āryaka-bhaṭṭāraka*), and the one found at Site 59, subsequently re-used as the base of a lime-trough, was meant for the foreman of artisans (*āvesaṇi*) Mūlabhūta of Pavayāta. As already stated (p. 16), memorials, about five in number, were raised also in honour of the dead soldiers and chiefs at Site 113, all of them hailing from the locality called in the epigraphs as Magalaraṇa.

The pillars at the last-mentioned site formed part of a wayside rest-house. A pillar representing the memorial of prince Eli Ehuvaladāsa, a step-brother

of the ruling monarch Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla, came from the vicinity of a pillared house, Site 61, which had two square shrines added to it later on. The area between Sites 9 and 61 yielded ten memorial-pillars raised in honour of *senāpatis* and *mahātalavaras*. Of all the memorials, the one installed in honour of the Kuḷahaka chief Chāṁtapūḷa occupied the most prominent position by virtue of its location just outside the eastern gate of the citadel, here too associated with a pillared rest-house.

The earliest example dating back to the early years of Vīrapurushadatta was recovered earlier somewhere from the area around Site 9. It was raised to commemorate the death of Chāṁtamūla by the female members of the palace including queens and other women. Whether memorials came up to commemorate the death of other kings is not known, but the memorial of Vaṁmabhaṭṭā, the mother of Rudrapurushadatta, at Site 27, appears to be the latest in the series (above, p. 16).

H. Sculptural art under the Ikshvākus

The sculptures of Nagarjunakonda produced under the Ikshvākus represent the closing phase of the glorious art-tradition of the lower Krishna valley that had its beginning at Amaravati and Jaggayyapeta in the second century B.C. The tradition reached its heights during the time of the later Sātavāhanas some time in the middle of the second century A.D., and it was this mature art that got a fresh lease of life with the rise of the Ikshvākus in the lower Deccan.

The Ikshvāku phase of the art of the lower Krishna lasted for a century or so, and it too has its own history of development. On the basis of the style of execution and treatment of human figures, the collection here may broadly be divided into two groups. The earlier of them, perhaps dating back to the initial years of Māṭharī-putra Vīrapurushadatta, consists of drum-slabs, and a few memorial-pillars, including the one raised in honour of Chāṁtamūla (above, p. 44). Carvings on the drum-slabs are in low relief and are marked by some amount of stylization, noticeable specially in the representation of galaxy of *chhatras* (umbrellas) surmounting the *stūpa*. Invariably these slabs bear depictions of plain *stūpas* not associated with any anthropomorphic figure of the Master: wheel, feet, column of fire, throne with *svastika*, and other symbols represented Buddha in all such cases.

Despite their developed forms some amount of rigidity in the delineation of human figures is also discernible. The scenes from the life of Chāṁtamūla carved on his memorial-pillar reflect almost the same tradition. On the whole, the sculptural art of Vīrapurushadatta's time lacks the vigour and assuredness of the mature Amaravati tradition, which must have crossed its meridian at least about a century back. But there are reasons for this faltered beginning here: the time that elapsed from the fall of the Sātavāhanas to the political stabilization of the Ikshvākus might not have been a period of protracted peace and tranquility, and this unsettled condition was bound to cast its uneasy shadow on the artistic pursuits as well.

The second group of figures came from Site 9, the sculptural embellishments of which might have taken place in the eighth regnal year of Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla. But the figures portrayed in the reliefs of the conversion of the *yaksha* Āḷavaka and scenes from the *Māndhātu-Jātaka* (below, p. 64) look somewhat stumpy without any attempt towards attenuation of limbs. The mastery of showing different planes and sequence of events, apart from the delicate poses and subtle expressions on lineaments, so characteristic of the mature phase, was yet to stage a return. A feature that at once catches the eye is the tight-fitted head-dress, with a knot on one side in most cases. Further, the transparent *saṅghāṭi* drapes both the shoulders of the Buddha-figures, shown in *dhyāna* as well as in *vyākhyāna-mudrā*. In the depiction of the story of the *Sasa-Jātaka* (below, p. 63) the sculptor has, however, shown considerable skill in the delineation of animal-figures. Yet being executed in low relief it lacks the instinctive appeal so profound in other examples from the valley. These sculptures from Site 9 heralded the beginning of the artistic outburst of the Ikshvāku period, and incidentally, the event synchronized with the advent of metrical Sanskrit in inscriptions of the valley some time in the eleventh regnal year of Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla. Figures carved in the round must have appeared in this period as is evident from a mutilated standing image of Buddha inside an apsidal shrine, Site 9.

There is, however, no clearly-datable series of the evolved phase except a long panel (below, pp. 58-59) from Site 106 dated in the twenty-fourth regnal year of

Ehuvala. It shows alternately *mithuna*-figures and scenes from Buddha's life; in artistic vision as well as in the elegant style of execution it is sure to occupy a pride of place in the entire gamut of Nagarjunakonda sculptures. Pieces recovered from Sites 2, 3, 6, 32 A and 78 bear close affinity with the above-mentioned panel. Architecturally also all the sites, with the exception of Site 6, showed developed features. Executed in bold relief these sculptures have rhythm and clarity of lines, and multitudes of figures are so balanced as to create both harmony and beauty. But far greater achievement of the artist of this period is his ability to mirror the human expression—the pathos and emotion, the joy and sorrow through the medium of stone. The introduction of *mithuna*-figures (pl. XII A) in different moods of expression adds a greater sensuous aroma to the sculptures, while the depiction of several dwarf-figures in different moods (pl. XII B) infuses an element of comic and sometimes even sarcasm. The sarcastic attitude of a group of dwarfs towards Nanda, who was out in the street with his begging-bowl concealed under the garment, is a very significant portrayal.

All the major themes depicted in the sculptures were taken out of the leaves of the Buddhist literature, and more than a dozen Jātaka stories—the *Champeyya-Jātaka* (Cowell's no. 506), *Dasaratha-Jātaka* (no. 461), *Dīghitikosala-Jātaka* (no. 371), *Gata-Jātaka* (no. 355), *Mahāhaṁsa-Jātaka* (no. 534), *Mahāpaduma-Jātaka* (no. 472), *Māndhātu-Jātaka* (no. 258), *Matakabhatta-Jātaka* (no. 18), *Sasa-Jātaka* (no. 316), *Sivi-Jātaka* (no. 499), *Vessantara-Jātaka* (no. 547), etc., (below, pp. 62-66)

are depicted here. Of them, the story of the *Māndhātu-Jātaka* appears to be the most favourite theme of the Nagarjunakonda artist. There are graphic descriptions of various scenes connected with Buddha's life, and for illustrating them the artists have very successfully selected the most dramatic moments. Of all the scenes Māra's attack and retreat and Muchalinda protecting Buddha seem to have been most popular. In certain cases the sculptor has faithfully followed the description of the *Buddha-charita*: the panel (below, p. 68) showing the breaking of the news of Siddhārtha's departure has all the pathos that Aśvaghosha has poured into his verses. Similarly, the panels depicting the scenes of the conversion of Nanda (below, p. 59; pl. XI A) a story occurring also in the bas-reliefs of Gandhāra and Amaravati and in the paintings of Ajanta, are based on Aśvaghosha's Sanskrit poem *Saundarananda*. Even the *Lalita-vistara* influenced the artist considerably in selecting the appropriate theme of popular appeal.

There is, however, no reason to assume that the plastic tradition of all the sites owed their origin to one regimented group of sculptors, for there are noticeable variations not only in themes but also in the style of execution amongst the collections from different sites. For instance, sculptural representations from Site 3 appear to be slightly superior to those from Site 2, which often show the combination of two scenes in one panel without the slightest attempt to differentiate the one from the other. In such scenes Buddha has been shown twice in the same relief but generally in two different attitudes. He is depicted with his *saṅghāṭi*

covering both the shoulders alongside the figure with one shoulder bare; the latter mode appears to have attained more popularity at Nagarjunakonda. Moreover, Buddha seated on a *siṁhāsana* with a discular halo fixed on a Bodhi-tree is another favourite motif of the sculptors of Site 2. At Site 3 also Buddha is shown with a halo fixed on a Bodhi-tree but rarely is the throne depicted in the form of *siṁhāsana*. Another type of halo—besides the simple discular one—that attained popularity at Nagarjunakonda, possibly from the very beginning, is the one fixed on the hood of the *nāga* Muchalinda, the most favourite motif of the art of Nagarjunakonda. It may be mentioned here that Buddha has been depicted here mostly in *abhaya* and *vyākhyāna-mudrās*, although *dhyāna-mudrā* is not entirely absent.

The Brāhmaṇical art-tradition followed more or less the same idiom. The beautiful reliefs of *sati*, two-armed female deity generally identified as Devasenā and the round sculptures of Kārttikeya (below, p. 71), besides several dwarf-figures, bear the imprint of the same mature style as the one noticed in the sculptures from the Buddhist settlements.

No less important is the secular art-tradition of Nagarjunakonda, although it is another manifestation of the same mature phase, differing more in contents than in the style of execution. The carvings on the memorial pillars may be included under this class, as the scenes illustrated on such columns, relate to the deeds and achievements of an individual with little or no didactic tinge. One of the favourite subjects of the memorial

pillars is the depiction of the battle-scenes which vary from pillar to pillar. The one on the memorial of Kuḷahaka-Chāṁtapūḷa shows only an elephant with a rider, while one of the pillars from Site 113 portrays a horseman approaching a fortress guarded by three cavaliers with drawn swords. Another pillar at the same site shows four warriors with sword or spear and shield in their hands.

The most vivid depiction of a battle-scene is on one of the three minutely-carved pillars from Site 37. In one of the panels is shown a warrior on a prancing horse with drawn spear, followed by another, engaged in a fierce battle with two foot-soldiers, the battle-field being strewn with fallen men. Other scenes include dancing dwarf holding a ram or a toy-cart, a woman bathing in a tub, scenes of dance and revelry, wrestling, etc. (below, p. 72). Representations of animals here too have acquired certain unique feature by almost combining a pair of bodies into one, with heads at opposite directions. On two such pillars figure the realistic representations of Śaka soldiers; even in the battle-scenes are to be seen figures with un-Indian dress and physiognomy. Again, the elaborate ornamentation on these shafts and two similar ones from Site 29 has no parallel at Nagarjunakonda, and the pillars carved with unusual motifs stand by themselves. Yet they may reveal an element of secular art-tradition of Nagarjunakonda.

The last known datable piece (below, p. 75) of the valley is the toilet-scene of the Śaka princess Vaṁmabhaṭṭā, the mother of Rudrapurushadatta. Whether it is a representative piece of the time of the

last Ikshvāku king is difficult to ascertain, but the lifeless portrait bounded by weak and wavering lines signals the decline of a vigorous art-tradition, that for several centuries created an aura of its own and occupies a distinct place in Indian art-history.

I. Medieval monuments on the hill

(i) *Ruins of the hill-fort*

The ruins of the hill-fort Nagarjunakonda, mentioned in several Vijayanagara inscriptions, embrace the entire length and breadth of the hill. At places its walls, running along the edges of the hill, still retain a height of 6 m, with an average width of 5·33 m. With bastions at regular intervals and six gateways, once guarded by barbicans, the original fortification must have had an imposing look.

The main entrance into the hill-fort proper is from the north-east through a passage leading up to the entrance formed by two colonnaded platforms. There were secret paths in the form of ramps and winding flights of steps as well. In the construction of the fort several sculptural pieces were re-used: a panel showing the *sapta-mātṛikās* came from one of the fallen debris of the wall. Covering an area of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ km, the fort had three different enclosures, still now almost intact. The eastern sector (first enclosure), within which now stands the Museum, has two temples and a large well. There are also traces of residential houses used possibly as barracks. A wide rubble-wall, with a

circuitous entrance in the centre, separates the eastern from the middle sector (second enclosure), the latter also with remains of rubble-houses meant for army-chiefs, two small wells and a stone temple. No less impressive was the dividing wall between the middle sector and the western sector (third enclosure) overlooking the river Krishna. A flight of steps connected the river bank with this part of the fort.

It is believed that the foundation of the fort was laid by the Reḍḍi rulers of Koṇḍavīḍu (above, p. 18) who broke the shackles of the Muslim rule some time in the second quarter of the fourteenth century. The plan and layout of the Reḍḍi fortification must have undergone considerable change in the hands of the subsequent rulers. There are epigraphical records to show that the Gajapati chiefs of Orissa were in occupation of the fort for a fairly long period until Kṛishṇadevarāya of Vijayanagara conquered it, defeating the Gajapati Pratāparudra in about 1515 and placed the fortress under the charge of the two generals, Vīrabhadrāyyā and Āyyalayyā. But it was Rāmarāya who renovated it in about 1565, using the material of some dilapidated shrines in the neighbourhood. In all likelihood, the present layout of the fort owed its origin largely to Rāmarāya.

(ii) *Temples*

All the three temples in the fort follow more or less the same plan, consisting of a square sanctum fronted by a vestibule (*antarāla*). The temples of Nāgeśvaraliṅga near the Museum in the eastern sector, built in A.D. 1413

by a Gajapati chieftain, has its extant brick *śikhara* or spire rising to a height of 5 m. The temple dedicated to Vishṇu, near the reconstructed Bathing ghat, also in the eastern sector, retains some portion of its pyramidal spire. On the other hand, no trace of any *śikhara* now exists on the temple, made of dressed granite, near the reconstituted Mahā-stūpa in the middle sector of the hill fort.

All the three temples are of dry-stone masonry. The walls are veneers of dressed stones, entirely devoid of any ornamentation either in the interior or on the exterior, save some kind of embellishment in the form of lotus-design on the ceilings made of stone slabs corbelled in horizontal courses. Again, with the exception of the temple near the Museum all other examples here have moulded *adhishṭhānas* or socles.

The temple near the reconstituted Mahā-stūpa was originally a Jaina shrine later converted into Vaishṇavite one, as the two pedestals inside the sanctum—one with the relief of Garuḍa and the other bearing the figures of two stylized lions flanking a leonine figure—would show. An image of a Jaina *tīrthaṅkara*, in black stone, kept outside the temple, provides additional ground for identifying the temple as originally a Jaina shrine. Almost the same story was repeated in the temple near the Bathing ghat, where too a seated torso of a Jaina *tīrthaṅkara* was placed inside the compound-wall. The available evidence, therefore, points to the existence of a Jaina settlement, at least a nucleus of it, on the hill-top prior to its selection as a peripheral fort by the Koṇḍavīḍu rulers (above, p. 18).

On stylistic considerations the temple near the Mahā-stūpa seems to be the earliest and might have come into existence some time in the middle of the fourteenth century. The construction of the hill-fort about this period possibly forced the Jainas to leave the area, but the temples were not converted into Vaishṇavite shrines until Kṛishṇadevarāya took possession of it in the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

5. THE MUSEUM

A. Scope and arrangement

This meseum presents relics, derived from the excavations or otherwise, of all periods through which Nagarjunakonda passed. They are also representative of the prehistory, protohistory and history of the whole region.

Near the entrance one may see, among other things, the Museum key-plan showing the arrangement of exhibits in the galleries. A hall in the rear contains the models of some excavated sites arranged around the model of the Nagarjunakonda valley.

B. Key gallery

(i) *Contents*

Key gallery offers the choicest specimens in the collection, such as jewellery, beads, coins, relic-caskets and limestone sculptures including a colossal Buddha, *yaksha* or demi-gods, sculptured slabs called *āyakapaṭa* and a moon-stone or semi-circular door-step.

(ii) *Beads*

In a showcase beads belonging to the successive phases of Nagarjunakonda are exhibited. Their first

use in the valley was attested to in the neolithic period (above, p. 8), when disc-beads of shell or steatite paste attained great popularity; a solitary specimen of long-barrel-circular bead of jasper was also found. Of the beads found in association with the megalithic burials (above, p. 11), both gold and silver beads were used in the necklaces. The Ikshvāku period saw the emergence of a large variety of types, of which collared beads of shell and glass seemed to have been the fashion. Beads made of stone and terracotta were in use side by side. Terracotta beads were used possibly also in rosary.

(iii) *Coins*

The collection of coins in another showcase includes issues of the Roman empire with which south India had brisk trade in the early centuries of the Christian era. Gold coins of the Roman rulers Tiberius (died A.D. 37), Faustina (died A.D. 141), the queen of Antonius, and Hadrian (died A.D. 138) were found in the excavation. Selected lead coins of the later Sātavāhanas and Ikshvāku rulers and a clay coin-mould are also on show here. Those of the Ikshvāku rulers bear the legends *Siri-Chāta*, *Siri-Vīra*, *Siri-Eha* and *Siri-Ruda*—these being the initials of the four successive kings Chāṁtamūla, Vīrapurushadatta, Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla and Rudrapurushadatta (above, pp. 13-17). Some coins of the Muslim rulers and the Vijayanagara kings are also on view.

(iv) *Relic-caskets*

All the important *stūpas* of Nagarjunakonda yielded reliquaries, variously of gold, silver, copper and glazed pottery. The one exhibited in showcase 3 along with a sketch came from Stūpa 8 belonging to the Mahīśāsaka sect. The gold reliquary containing relics in the form of bones, gold and silver flowers was kept inside a silver casket, which in turn, was placed inside a copper one, the group to be lodged ultimately inside a glazed earthenware receptacle simulating a miniature *stūpa*. Almost the same arrangement had been followed in all other cases for enshrining the relic or *dhātu*.

(v) *Ornaments*

Ornaments recovered in excavations here will offer a glimpse of the art of metal craftsmanship which must have reached a considerable height during the Ikshvāku rule, though the megalith-builders were the first to introduce gold and silver ornaments. A pair of gold spiral earrings and small cylinder beads of gold, originally arranged in a string along with silver ones, came from Megalith XIV of Site 63. The pot that yielded the coin of Faustina also produced some of the finest pieces of Ikshvāku jewellery: the gold necklace and the pair of earrings, the latter showing minute filigree-work, are examples of high workmanship. Equally remarkable are the gold and silver vessels recovered from the Sarvadeva temple, Site 99. Without any doubt they were meant to be used in religious ceremonies. That

gold and silver objects were prepared in the valley itself is evident from the discovery at Site 58 of a goldsmith's entire stock-in-trade, which included moulds of various designs and crucibles. A bronze figure (ht. 8·5 cm) with soldered arms and other components, shows the high antiquity of metal-sculpture in the south.

(vi) *Sculptures*

The most attractive piece of the gallery is the colossal figure of a Buddha (8)[1] standing to a height of about 3 m. Originally found in several fragments at Site 4, the image, like any other sculpture in the round from Nagarjunakonda, stands in frontal pose holding the hem of his garment in the left hand, while the right hand (broken) is granting protection. The ornamental moon-stone (10) fringed by a row of animals like the lion, bear, elephant, deer, bull and horse serves, as it were, a door-step leading to the shrine of Buddha; in fact, originally also it served the purpose of a door-step to an apsidal *chaitya-gṛiha* at Site 3. Two pot-bellied Yaksha figures (11 and 12)—Śaṅkha-nidhi and Padma-nidhi—greet visitors as soon as they enter the gallery.

On the eastern wing of the Key gallery is the panel (13) depicting in bold lines the main episodes of Buddha's life, each scene alternating with a *mithuna*-figure. It is dated in the twenty-fourth regnal year of Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla, when a member of a merchant community, Kumāranandi, donated the frieze to the

[1] Numerals within brackets indicate Museum accession numbers.

monastery at Site 106 (above p. 35). In its elegant style of execution as well as in the portrayal of human moods the relief ranks as one of the best specimens of Nagarjunakonda art.

A bust of Buddha (1) notable for its sharp features, is the first exhibit to be seen on the other side of the gallery, which has a number of architectural pieces like the cornice-beam, coping-stone and *āyaka-paṭa*. The gods carrying away in procession the relinquished crown of Gautama Buddha at the time of his great renunciation is the theme depicted within a medallion on an *āyaka-paṭa* (2). In the next exhibit (3) are carved the scenes of conversion of Nanda (pl. XI A), a cousin of Buddha. It is one of the finest pieces of Nagarjunakonda showing from right to left the scenes of the meeting of Nanda and his wife Sundarī with Buddha, tonsure ceremony for Nanda's ordination, Buddha flying to heaven with Nanda and the final conversion. These panels are alternated with lively portrayals of *mithuna*-couples in their affected moods. Like many other cornice beams from Nagarjunakonda, the present one also ends in a charming figure of a tree-nymph.

The next exhibit is a drum-slab (4) from Site 3, carved with a developed form of a *stūpa*. It is followed by a cornice-beam (5) depicting, apart from the *mithuna* scenes, the five important life-events of Gautama Buddha, viz., Birth, Great Renunciation, Māra's attack, First Sermon at Sarnath and *Mahāparinirvāṇa* (Great Extinction). On the next slab (6) is to be seen the serpent-king Muchalinda, a favourite motif of the Nagarjunakonda artists. The delineation of garland-bearers in

flowing rhythm, the subject matter of the next exhibit, a coping-stone (9), also attained wide popularity in the Ikshvāku times.

In this gallery are also to be seen a few carved pieces from the Brāhmaṇical sites. The large stone slab depicting mother goddess (7) is from Site 127 and bears an inscription of the time of Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla. Two slender yet minutely-carved pillars (14 and 15), which divide the Key gallery from the Main gallery, are from the Ashṭabhujasvāmin temple, Site 29. These carvings, mostly of secular nature, bear close similarity with those found on almost identical pillars from Site 37.

(vii) *Prehistoric and protohistoric objects*

Early Stone Age.—Stone objects displayed in this section have their definite shapes and purposes. The earliest such tools, dating back to about two hundred thousand years from now, were used by Early Stone Age people to hunt animals and dig out roots and tubers for food (above, p. 6). The excavation at Site 128 disclosed one of their factory sites located right on a pebble-bed which served, at the same time, as their source of raw-material. They produced points (handaxes) out of the chipped pieces of pebbles, and such tools once fitted to a long spike or straight branch of tree could have been used also as a sort of javelin or spear-head. Broad, sharp-edged cleavers were employed for cutting or digging. The process of manufacturing the tools is illustrated in stages by original tools placed in plaster-models.

MIDDLE STONE AGE.—Tools manufactured by the Middle Stone Age man (above, p. 6), some fifty thousand years back, had two distinct sources of raw-material, viz., quartzite pebbles from the river bank and still harder stones from the neighbouring hills. The delicately-retouched arrow-heads, obviously used in hunting and chase, blades and scrapers, all smaller in size than those of the preceding period, bear stamp of a developing technology.

LATE STONE AGE.—In the Late Stone Age (above, p. 7), as the specimens displayed in the showcase would show, the tools were still smaller in size. In spite of the use of harder stones of various hues, like chert, jasper, agate, rock-crystal tools produced are beautiful specimens with recurring shapes, some of them conforming to geometric forms like triangle, trapeze and crescent. Yet each of them had a definite function, and several microliths fixed up together often made useful tools, such as a sickle, as illustrated here.

NEOLITHIC AGE.—From tool-types it is difficult to conjecture if the Late Stone Age man had any rudimentary knowledge of cultivation. But the neolithic tools, recovered in association with pottery, beads, and animal-bones would show that shoe-last celts, long weeding-hoe, picks with twin working-edge and elongated celts were used in tillage-operations. At the same time, axes, adzes, chisels and axe-hammers reveal the aptitude of the neolithic folk in carpentry. For the first time in the valley earthenware pots, entirely hand-made, made their appearance in the earliest neolithic settlement (above, p. 8). In the subsequent

phases one finds a great many types like urns, spouted pots, bowls and jars in red, black and burnished grey wares.

MEGALITHIC AGE.—The megalithic culture of the valley, (above, p. 11), like that of other parts of south India, was a much more developed one, disclosing for the first time the use of iron implements like knives, arrow-heads, spear-heads, wedges and axes, some of which are on show here along with the characteristic Black-and-red Ware like dishes, bowls, elongated stands, etc.

C. MAIN GALLERY

(i) *Contents*

In this gallery are exhibited ornamental limestone slabs that once decorated the bodies of the *stūpas*. They depict scenes from the *Jātaka* stories and the life of Buddha. Also to be seen are small- and medium-sized sculptures and lintels of limestone, stucco and terracotta figures, all typical of the Ikshvāku period, and pottery of that and subsequent times. The gallery also houses the Brāhmaṇical deities discovered in the course of excavation, apart from a few pillars bearing reliefs on secular subjects. In addition, a few images in the round, inscriptions and medieval sculptures are also exhibited.

(ii) *Jātaka stories*

The sculptures in the northern wing of the gallery depict the *Jātaka* tales carved variously on drum-slabs,

dome-slabs and cornice-beams. On a mutilated drum-slab (16) from Site 9, is represented the story of *Sasa-Jātaka*. Bodhisattva in one of his previous births is born as a hare. His friends are a monkey, a jackal and an otter. The otter brings fish, the jackal a lizard and milk and the monkey some mangoes as gifts for worthy guests on a full-moon day. The hare, however, decides to offer himself as gift. Now, the god Śakra dressed as Brāhmaṇa approaches them for something to eat. The hare leaps into the fire in order to roast himself, but the fire does not burn him. Śakra then explains to him how he has come to put him to test.

In the *Champeyya-Jātaka*, the subject matter of the next exhibit (17), the Bodhisattva is born as a serpent king. As the story goes, a snake-charmer takes him to king Ugrasena in Vārāṇasī where the snake amuses the king. Sumanā, the wife of the snake-king, appears in the king's court. The snake is ashamed of his feat on seeing Sumanā, who seeks her husband's release. Finally, the serpent king shares the throne with the king of Vārāṇasī. The story is represented on the cornice-beam, perhaps recovered from Site, 9, in four panels, the first of which depicts the catching of the snake from an ant-hill by the snake-charmer.

In the *Sivi*-or *Śibi-Jātaka*, carved on a drum-slab (3), a pigeon, who is no other than the fire-God Agni in disguise, is seated on the left palm of king Śibi for shelter (pl. XI B). The hunter, the disguised god Śakra, accepts the king's own flesh for weighing the pigeon to its equal weight. Elsewhere, the pigeon is perched on the end of the horizontal beam of the balance and the king's flesh

on the other end in the pan (32). But the king's flesh not being sufficient for the purpose, he himself sits on the pan of the balance. On this, the gods Śakra and Agni appear in their real forms to laud the king.

The *Māndhātu-Jātaka*, a favourite subject of the Nagarjunakonda artists, is portrayed variously. A cornice-beam (24) from Site 9, exhibited on the southern wing, gives the story in three panels along with the legend of Madhu-bindu and other scenes. Seven gems —a wheel, an elephant, a horse, a gem, a wife, a householder and a minister—wait upon the king Māndhātā whose palace, as one of the scenes here shows, is guarded by female attendants. The other scene depicted here is the crushing of the water-inhabiting *nāgas* in the course of his conquest of the Trayastriṁśa heaven. A dome-slab (20) on the northern wing shows the scene of his sharing the throne with Śakra on reaching the heaven. He wants even to oust Śakra but his evil thought causes him to fall down from heaven in a park of his capital-city (20 and 29). A corner of the slab (29) shows the sky with a comet, implying that the king is lying on his death-bed.

The *Mahāpaduma-Jātaka* is depicted on a dome-slab. The queen, who is the step-mother of Padmakumāra, the handsome son of king Brahmadatta of Vārāṇasī, is enamoured of him, but the prince does not respond to her overtures. The frustrated queen complains to the king that the prince has molested her in his absence. Subsequent events of the tale have been given in three scenes on the dome-slab (30). The top one shows that on king's orders Padmakumāra is thrown down the

robber's cliff and a *nāga* king protects the virtuous prince, who turns into an ascetic. In the next scenes the king getting the actual facts, requests Padmakumāra to return to Vārāṇasī and take over the kingdom but the prince declines the offer.

A scene of the *Vessantara-Jātaka* is depicted on a drum-slab (31) bearing the representation of an ornamental *stūpa*. Prince Vessantara takes a vow to give whatever has been requested of him. A Brāhmaṇa, Jūjaka by name, asks in a forest to give his two sons as slaves and the request is complied with. Śakra asks for prince's wife, whom also he gladly parts with. Pleased with prince's pious and virtuous deeds of high magnitude, Śakra restores his kingdom and family to him.

Next to this drum-slab is displayed a cornice-beam (32), depicting scene from the *Māndhātu-Jātaka* and *Sivi-Jātaka*. Also shown are three life-events of Buddha like the subjugation of Nāga Apalāla, Māra's attack and the symbolic representation of Great Extinction. All these scenes are alternated with figures of *mithuna*-couples.

The cornice-beam is followed by a dome-slab (33) containing two *Jātakas*. In the upper compartment is shown the king of Vārāṇasī ordering the execution of the defeated king Dīghiti of Kośala and his wife. Their son Dīghāvu meets them on their way to the place of execution. Dīghiti advises Dīghāvu to conquer hatred by love. Dīghāvu enters the service of the king of Vārāṇasī and thinks of killing the king in a forest but soon changes his mind. The king on identifying Dīghāvu, restores the kingdom of Kośala to him.

The lower compartments of the slab (33) exhibit the *Dasaratha-Jātaka*. King Dasaratha of Vārāṇasī and his chief queen have two sons and a daughter: Rāma, Lakshmaṇa and Sītā. Another queen who gives birth to Bharata is granted a boon by the king, and she utilizes it in course of time by demanding that Bharata should rule the kingdom. Fearing that the scheming queen would do some harm to the elder sons, the king orders them to stay for twelve years in forests. Sītā joins her brothers. In the mean time, the king dies; but Bharata would not accept the reins of the kingdom and invites Rāma to return and become the king. Rāma asks Bharata to place his pair of sandals on the throne and rule the kingdom on his behalf for three years. Thereafter, they return home and Rāma is crowned.

A relief on a *maṇḍapa* pillar (44) from Site 37 is reminiscent of a scene from the *Mahāhaṁsa-Jātaka*, in which queen Kshemā and king Saṁyama of Vārāṇasī take fancy for two golden geese flying in the air. They employ a hunter to catch them in a net and he brings the geese much to their joy. One of the two birds, Sumukha, the goose-king, preaches to the king and queen.

(iii) *Life-scenes of Buddha*

Life-scenes of Buddha occur very frequently in the carvings of Nagarjunakonda. On the southern and western wings are arranged several dome-slabs depicting the important events of the life of Gautama Buddha. It is said that Dīpaṅkara Buddha predicted that Brāhmaṇa Sumedha would appear as Gautama, the Buddha.

In the upper compartment of a dome-slab (27) is shown the scene in which Sumedha, who resides in the Tushita heaven as Bodhisattva, resolving to take his final birth on earth as Gautama. The lower compartment depicts his descent in a heavenly chariot as a white elephant accompanied by celestial musicians, to enter the body of Māyā. There are seven scenes, carved on a cornice-beam (45), which present vividly the subsequent events. When Māyādevī delivers the child in the Lumbinī garden (45 and 49) four Mahā-Brahmās receive the child on a golden net; on a cushion is placed a spouted *purṇa-ghaṭa*, while a *chhatra* or umbrella appears above as a mark of *chakravartin*. Māyā stands holding the *śāla* tree, and a lady bears the staff of royalty. Now, Asita examines the mark of the child, who is represented by a pair of feet on the cloth, and predicts that he would be a *chakravartin* amongst the kings or the sages. The child is then taken through the streets of Kapilavastu and the *yaksha* pays homage to him.

When grown up, Gautama witnesses four visions that led to his renunciation: sees a corpse (28), an old man (28), a diseased man (48) and an ascetic (28). All these make him contemplate on the woes of life (45 and 48). Once in the dead of night, while the female musicians sleep carelessly—a scene wholly repulsive to him—he decides to renunciate. Kaṇṭhaka, the horse, and Chhandaka, its groom, carry him away from Kapilavastu (5, 13, 45, 48 and 49). Even the gods are ready for the auspicious moment: Indra spreads parasol on him; four *dik-pālas* or guardians of the directions hold hoofs of the horse on palms so that there is no noise;

musicians and bearers carrying flag-staff, sword and fly-whisk accompany him (pl. X A). Then on the banks of the river Anomā, he changes his garments for a monk's dress(50). In the middle compartment of the same stele is seen the gods carrying away the relinquished crown of Buddha. Chhandaka returns to Kapilavastu with Kaṇṭhaka and narrates, as the uppermost compartment depicts, the events to Gautama's royal father Suddhodana, who is shocked to hear the news (pl. X B); Yasodharā, Gautama's wife, almost collapses.

Gautama practises penances for six years, at the end of which, at Uruvelā (Bodh-Gaya), he accepts milk and rice from Sujātā (51), and sits under the Bodhi-tree determined not to give up seat until he has gained full insight. Māra, the Evil one, with his associates attacks him but has to retreat with folded hands (5, 13, 32, 45, 49 and 51). During his penances a high storm breaks out at Uruvelā and the serpent king Muchalinda coils round his body till it is over (4, 23, 24 and 52). Eventually he attains his enlightenment at Bodh-Gaya.

The gods request Buddha to preach the law to the world (55 and 51) and he, therefore, proceeds to Ṛishipatana Mṛigadāva (Sarnath) to preach to the five monks first (37, 52). On his way, he receives meals from Trapussa and Bhallika (52). At Sarnath he propounds his doctrine to Kauṇḍiṇya, Aśvajit, Bhadriya, Vappa and Mahānāman and the noblemen of Vārāṇasī (52).

In course of time Buddha visits Kapilavastu and approaches the apartments of Yasodharā who stands

waiting at the door (45). Rāhula enquires of him about inheritance and is ultimately converted (69). Buddha goes to the Trayastriṁśa heaven to preach to his mother Māyā. Also, he converts the robber Aṅgulimāla (70), the emperor Ajātaśatru (68 and 69), the *nāga* of Uruvelā (53) and the *yaksha* Āḷavaka (18 and 24) and grants audience to Indra (71).

Passing through these and similar other events Buddha attains *Parinirvāṇa* (Extinction) at Kuśīnagara and the event is generally symbolized by the representation of a *stūpa*.

Some more *stūpa*-slabs, mostly on the eastern wing, depict life-scenes inside the relief of the *stūpa*. The one (34) exhibited at the end of the northern wing is an example of highly ornamental drum-slab bearing the complete representation of a *stūpa*. On either side of the *harmikā* are carved flying *vidyādharas* in graceful movement, while the dome part of the relief of the *stūpa* contains minute carvings devoted mainly to the depiction of scenes from the story of the conversion of Nanda. The *āyaka-paṭa* (35), used for encasing the *āyaka* platform, contains within a medallion a beautifully-carved relief of Buddha preaching to the gods including Śakra and the *gandharva* Chitrasena. A drum-slab (58) on the eastern wing seems to bear on the dome part of the *stūpa*-relief a representation of the Nālāgiri episode in which Nālāgiri, an elephant, was let loose by Devadatta, the jealous cousin of Buddha. The infuriated elephant ran in the street of Rājagṛiha causing great havoc but on reaching Buddha it prostrated at the feet of the Master. The central attraction of the stele, however, is

a fine representation of seated Buddha. Māra's attack and subsequent retreat have been delineated in one of the compartments of a dome-slab (59), which is in a very much fragmentary condition. The next exhibit is a drum-slab (60) of highly ornamental type with a standing figure of Buddha in *abhaya-mudrā*. Its dome part contains miniature reliefs of palace-scenes of the night before Gautama's departure. An identical drum-slab (64), with Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi as the central figure, depicts on the dome part two scenes from the Aṅgulimāla episode. On another drum-slab (63), which is unusually slender, is carved instead of a *stūpa* a seated figure of Buddha under the halo of the *nāga* Muchalinda. Buddha is shown wearing double-lined garment, the only extant example of its kind from Nagarjunakonda. A lotus pool with two worshippers in the lower part of the same slab may stand for the Anotatta lake, associated with Māyā's conception.

Some of the *stūpa* slabs (55, 57, and 68) on the eastern wing show the worship of Buddha in symbolic forms like Bodhi-tree, *chakra* and *stūpa*. Two such slabs (25 and 26) are to be seen also at the commencement of the southern wing. They do not belong to the ornamental variety but depict a *stūpa* without much carvings.

The upper friezes of dome-slabs generally show rows of animals, *triratnas* and *stūpas*. In one such slab (62) a Scythian along with local persons have been shown worshipping a *stūpa*. There is a dome-slab (61) showing from bottom upwards rows of *triratna*, *stūpas*, *purṇa-ghaṭas* and *mālā-vāhakas* ('garland-bearers').

(iv) *Images of Buddha*

No less than a dozen images represented either by their torsos or busts are exhibited in different parts of the galleries (8, 22, 39, 41, 42, 54, 88, 99, 100, 115, 116 and 117). While the biggest one (8) stands to a height of more than 3 metres, the smallest specimen (100), perhaps a votive offering, measures not more than 27 cm in height. All of them originally were standing images with one of the hands in the *abhaya*. Draped in long robes their right shoulders have been shown invariably bare. In some cases, lotus pedestals are still extant; one such example (54), from Site 32 A, has a groove on the top of its lotus pedestal, which yielded a gold tube containing several pearls and ashes.

(v) *Brāhmaṇical deities and miscellaneous images*

In showcases in the central part of the hall are seen some of the Brāhmaṇical deities like Kārttikeya with cock or peacock (104 and 110) by his side, one of them recovered from Site 82; a female deity (119) identified as Devasenā, the consort of Kārttikeya, from Site 39; a limestone *liṅga* (109); and Hāritī (47) from Site 17, besides a number of beautiful images in the round (108, 111, 113 and 120).

Some of the Brāhmaṇical sites yielded figures of dwarfs, the most impressive of which is the bust of a *yaksha* (21) from Site 64. Two female busts (95 and 96) seen in a showcase may be *yakshī* figures. Another showcase displays a unique representation of a *satī* with her slim body, bereft of all ornaments, reclining

against a ladder, and surrounded by fires at four corners (118). This was recovered from Site 127 which brought to light another sculpture of a lady lying in state (111). A few figures of *vidyādhara* (97, 98 and 102) are also on show in the central wing of the gallery.

(vi) *Miscellaneous sculptures and architectural pieces*

Two beautifully-carved *maṇḍapa*-pillars (36 and 44), both from Site 37, present variety of scenes including dancing *yakshas* playing with toys. Various dance-scenes have been portrayed on another pillar (40) from the same site; a relief of a female guard can also be seen here. A pillar (43) from the Bahuśrutīya monastery, Site 5, has a squarish bottom part, each side depicting respectively a standing Buddha, *nāga* Muchalinda, preaching Buddha and the Wheel of Law. Its upper part is octagonal, surmounted by a capital. In all likelihood, it stood in front of the square shrine inside the *vihāra.*

Nagarjunakonda has produced magnificent examples of door-jambs, screen-slabs, cross-bars, and ceiling-slabs all bearing the stamp of mature plastic tradition. Two door-jambs (131 and 132), partly mutilated, show standing *nāga*-figure in graceful pose, along with other attendants. Of the screen-slabs, the most outstanding pieces (129 and 130) are from Site 3. These are carved on both the sides with neatly-executed reliefs of human figures, dwarfs, overlapping elephants, apart from richly-designed friezes and bands. From the same site was recovered a cross-bar (134) showing an elephant inside a medallion. Two intact

ceiling-slabs (133 and 134) have lotus medallions in the centre; both the pieces show traces of iron-hook fixed in the centre.

An excellent example of preliminary drawing *(hasta-lekha)* on a slab before carving (89) is on show here; this rare piece also came from Site 3.

Though mutilated, some of the female figures displayed in showcases, are examples of fine workmanship, representing the climax of the Nagarjunakonda art-tradition. Graceful lines infused with charming rhythm can be seen in no. 120, while in no. 123 the sculptor successfully portrays the beaming face of a complacent lady caressed by her lover.

(vii) *Inscriptions*

The Ikshvāku rulers and their queens left a large number of inscriptions in the valley. Such records occur on tall pillars that adorned the front of the *stūpas*, *maṇḍapa*-pillars, isolated memorial pillars, detached slabs and images of deities. The script with long vertical loops is typical of the age. The language is mostly Prakrit but there are a few inscriptions in Sanskrit as well. These records throw light on the prevailing religions in the valley during the Ikshvāku rule and tell one that the Buddhist establishments were frequented by people coming from distant lands; in fact, some monasteries were built also for some Buddhist communities from Sri Lanka. From the inscriptions one may also come to know that the resident monks belonged to a number of Buddhist sects (above, p. 31).

The earliest epigraphic record in this gallery is the four-line Prakrit inscription on a pillar (79) of the sixth regnal year of Vijaya Sātakarṇi, one of the last Sātavāhana kings, in Brāhmi script of the third century A.D. This Buddhist record establishes beyond doubt that Buddhism had penetrated into the valley even before the Ikshvākus.

The Prakrit inscription on a carved memorial pillar (*chhāyā-stambha*), depicting king Vāśishṭhiputra Chāṁtamūla as distributing gold to his subjects in one of the four panels, also records that the pillar (73) was set up by the thirty female members of the palace during the rule of his son and successor king Vīrapurushadatta.

A Prakrit inscription in eight lines on an *āyaka*-pillar (72) records adoration to Buddha and informs that Chāṁtaśrī, the aunt of the ruling king and sister of Chāṁtamūla, erected the pillar for the sake of attainment by herself of the bliss of *nirvāṇa* in the sixth regnal year of king Vīrapurushadatta.

Another Prakrit inscription on a stone pillar (78) records the erection of a fully-equipped monastery for the Bahuśrutīya sect by Mahādevī Bhaṭṭidevī, wife of Mahārāja Māṭharīputra Vīrapurushadatta in the second regnal year of Rājā Vāśishṭhiputra Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla.

Another pillar-inscription in Sanskrit (77) invokes Mahādeva Pushpabhadrasvāmin and records the construction of a shrine by Mahāsenāpati Hāritīputra Vīrapurushadatta in the sixteenth regnal year of king Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla.

A second Sanskrit inscription on a stone slab (80) records salutation to Purāṇa-purusha Nārāyaṇa and the

installation of a wooden image of Ashṭabhujasvāmin on the Setagiri by one Śivaśepa, the Yavana-rāja of Saṁjayapura, Śaka Rudradāman of Avantī and Vishṇu-rudra-śivalānanda Sātakarṇi of Vanavāsi in the thirtieth year of the Ābhīra era corresponding to A.D. 278 (above p. 14). A beautiful conch (above, p. 25) also records the inscription *bhagavato Aṭhabhujasāmisa.*

The Prakrit inscription (87) on a foot-print slab records the installation of the Buddha-pāda in the monastery of the Vibhājyavādin and Theravādin teachers who were experts in the nine-fold teaching of Buddha and who converted to Buddhism the peoples of Kaśmīra, Gandhāra, Yavana, Vanavāsi and Tāmraparṇī island.

A pillar inscription in Prakrit (74) records that in the eleventh regnal year of Vāśishṭhiputra Rudrapurushadatta was erected the memorial pillar (*chhāyā-stambha*) of his deceased mother Vaṁmabhaṭṭā of the Bahaphala-gotra, who was the queen of Ehuvala Chāṁtamūla and daughter of a Mahākshatrapa of Ujjain. The lady sculptured on the top of the pillar probably represents the queen.

The Prakrit inscription on another stone pillar (81) records that this is the memorial pillar (*chhāyā-stambha*) of Chāṁtapūḷa of the Kuḷahaka family. The elephant-rider is probably Chāṁtapūḷa himself or an attendant.

The Telugu inscription on a stone-pillar (76) was probably issued by Śrīnātharāju Siṅgarāyya Mahāpātra during the time of king Purushottama Gajapati of Orissa.

(viii) *Medieval sculptures*

Among the medieval sculptures, the ornate image of Yoga-Nṛisiṁha (75) represents probably the art of the fourteenth century. The Jaina *tīrthaṅkara* (65) is a dynamic statue, in *yoga*-posture, of about thirteenth-fourteenth century. The images of Mahishamardinī Durgā (82), Gaṇeśa (83) and Nandi (84) belong to the sixteenth-seventeenth century, while Śiva (85) and Śakti (86), datable to seventeenth-eighteenth century, represent the latest phase of art at Nagarjunakonda.

D. Hall with models

On the floor of the Hall is a model, 6·01 m square, of the submerged valley and its surroundings (scale 1 cm=906 m), locating about one hundred and twenty excavated sites, besides topographical details. In the wall-cases all round are small-scale models of some excavated sites, such as neolithic and megalithic burials, the Mahā-stūpa, Amphitheatre, Bahuśrutīya-vihāra, Mahīśāsaka-vihāra, Sarvadeva temple, Pushpabhadra-svāmin temple, Ashṭabhujasvāmin temple, Bathing ghat and so on.

6. RECONSTITUTED MONUMENTS AND REPLICAS OF MONUMENTS

As stated above (pp. 1, 5, and 53), a few monuments have been faithfully reconstituted out of ancient material on the Nagarjuna-konda and on the east bank of the reservoir where the road from Macherla to what was the valley ends. Further, small-scale replicas of fourteen monuments are on view on the hill. These monuments and replicas are as follows:

A. Reconstituted monuments

(i) *On the Nagarjuna-konda*

Bathing ghat, Site 34 (described on p. 26); Megalith 1, Site 44 (p. 11); monastery, Site 4 (p. 33); apsidal shrine, Site 43 (p. 33); Mahā-stūpa and apsidal shrine, Site 1 (p. 32); tank supposedly for *aśvamedha*, Site 93 (p. 20); and *stūpa* with *svastika*-inset, Site 59 (p. 36).

(ii) *On the east bank of the reservoir*

Amphitheatre and so-called Hāritī temple, Site 17 (described on pp. 22 and 40); monasteries, Sites 3 and 32 A (p. 38); and the excavated temple, Site 56 (p. 29).

B. Replicas of monuments

(i) *First group*

Section across the rampart, Cutting A (described on p. 19); *stūpa* with four-spoked base, Site 14 (p. 33); monastery, Site 106 (p. 35); monastery, Site 4 (p. 33); temple, Site 64 (p. 28); *stūpa* with ten-spoked base, Site 16 (p. 33); Kārttikeya temple, Site 82 (p. 27); and temple-complex, Site 78 (pp. 27-28).

(ii) *Second group*

Sarvadeva temple, Site 99 (described on pp. 27-28); Pushpabhadrasvāmin temple (p. 26); Burning ghat, Site 126, (p. 25); section across the palaeolithic site, Site 128 (p. 6); tanks, supposedly for *aśvamedha*, Site 93 (p.20); and tank (*teppakuḷam*), Site 122 (p. 27).

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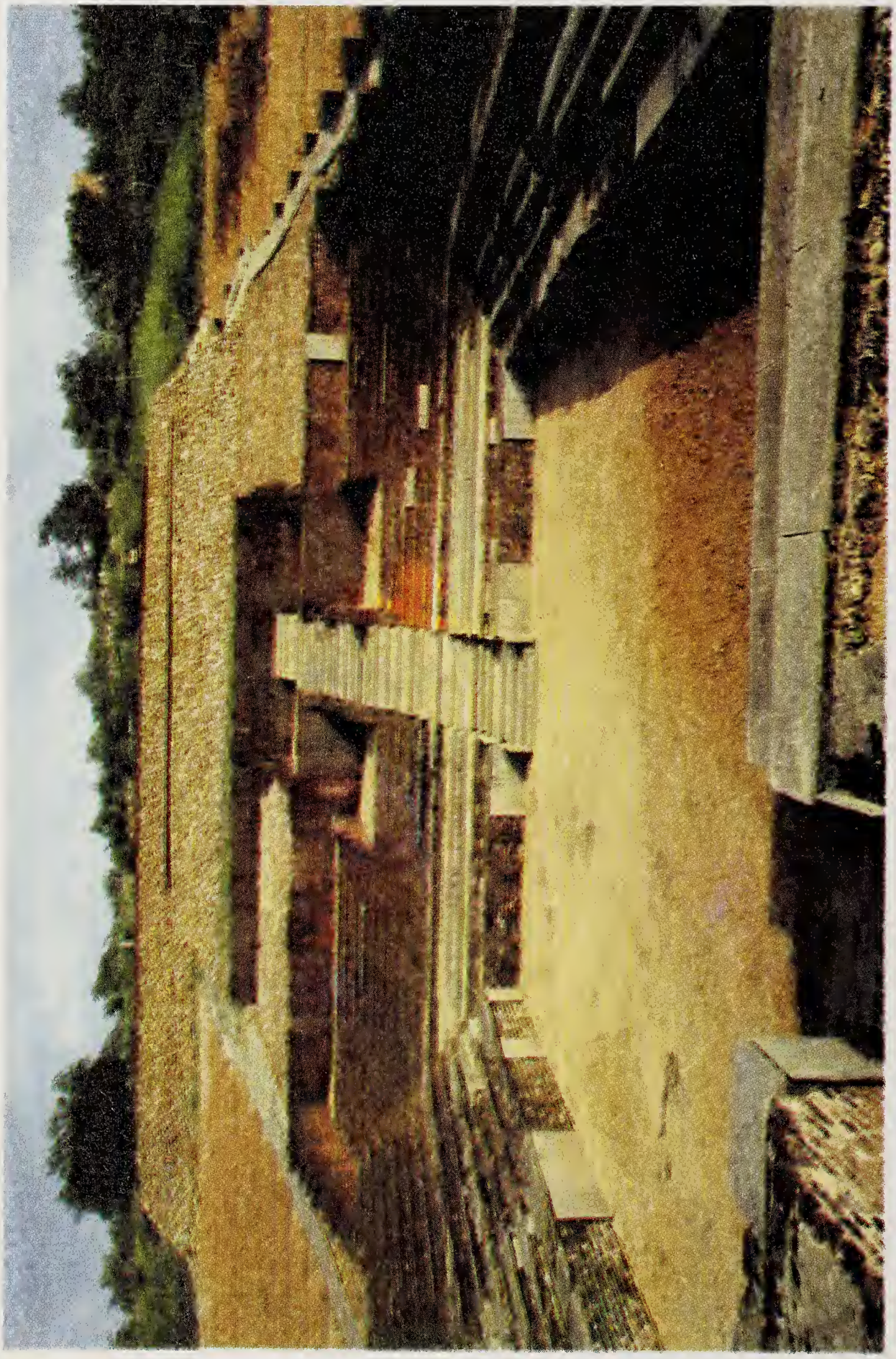
PLATE I

PLATE II



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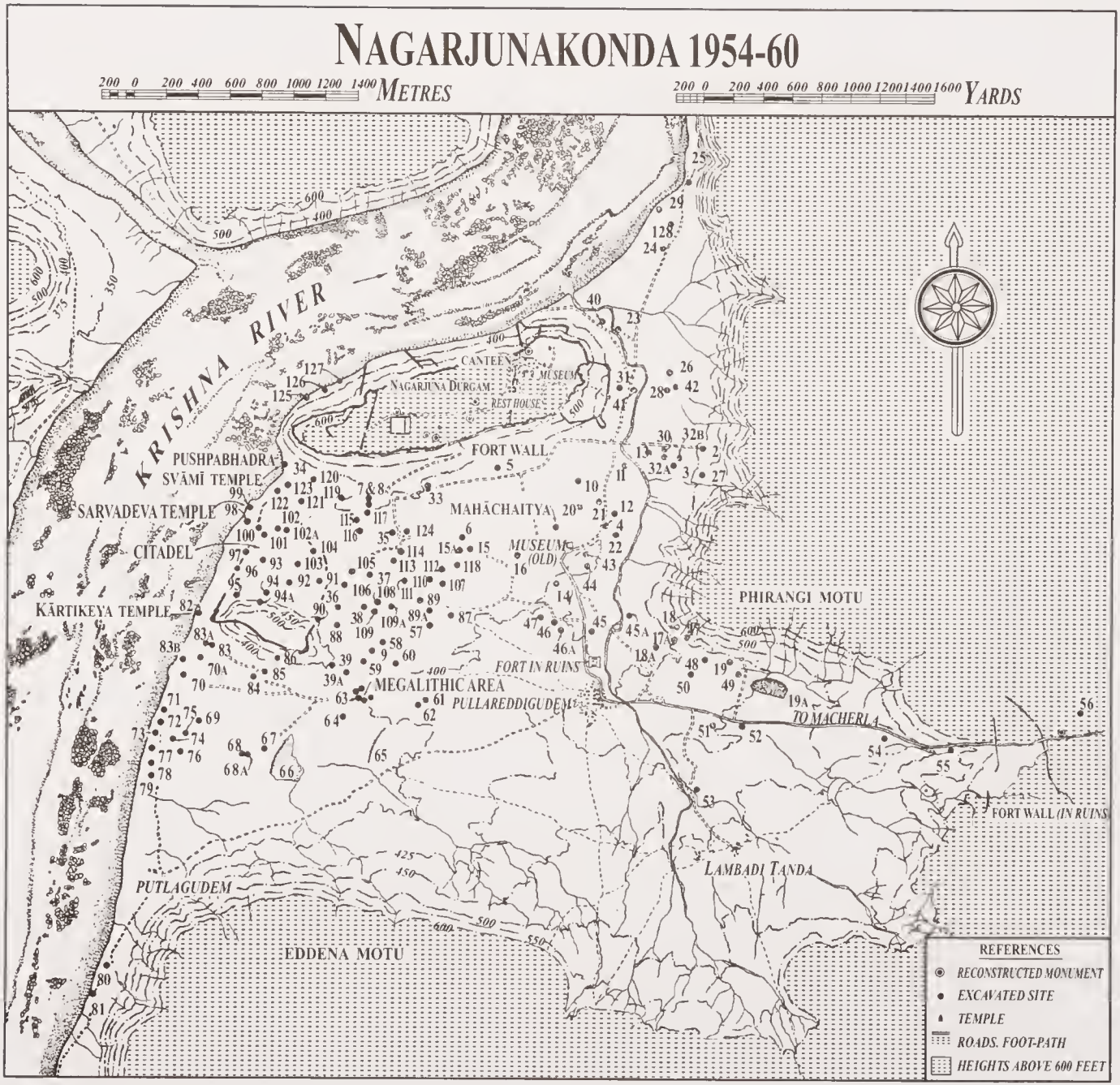
NAGARJUNAKONDA 1954-60
200 0 200 400 600 800 1000 1200 1400 METRES
200 0 200 400 600 800 1000 1200 1400 1600 YARDS
KRISHNA RIVER
CANTEEN
MUSEUM
NAGARJUNA DURGAM
REST HOUSE
FORT WALL
PUSHPABHADRA SVĀMĪ TEMPLE
SARVADEVA TEMPLE
CITADEL
MAHĀCHAITYA
MUSEUM (OLD)
KĀRTIKEYA TEMPLE
PHIRANGI MOTU
FORT IN RUINS
MEGALITHIC AREA
PULLAREDDIGUDEM
TO MACHERLA
FORT WALL (IN RUINS)
LAMBADI TANDA
PUTLAGUDEM
EDDENA MOTU
REFERENCES
RECONSTRUCTED MONUMENT
EXCAVATED SITE
TEMPLE
ROADS. FOOT-PATH
HEIGHTS ABOVE 600 FEET